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FOR QUIET MOMENTS.



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FOR QUIET MOMENTS

Devotional Readings

FROM THE PUBLISHED AND UNPUBLISHED WRITINGS
OF THE

RIGHT REV. G. H. WILKINSON, D.D.

BISHOP OF ST ANDREWS.

SELECTED AND ARRANGED BY

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PREFACE.

The Bishop of St. Andrew's has kindly consented to the publication of this little book, which consists of devotional readings selected both from his Lordship's published works and from other writings not hitherto accessible in book form. It is hoped that the selection may enable many to make a profitable use of their quiet moments.

FOR QUIET MOMENTS.

--Use and Abuse of Devotional Books.

DEVOTIONAL books are useful in their way.

(1.) As a help in beginning prayer, when we feel cold and dry. (2.) As a test of our own state of heart. For instance : when we read of holy men saying : "My sins have taken such hold upon me, that I am not able to look up ; yea, they are more in number than the hairs of my head," it may lead us to ask, if we have ever felt Sin in this way. And if not, whether there is not something *wrong* in our religion. Or again, as we read the prayers of holy men who seem, like St. John, to be "lying on JESUS' bosom," and we know that there is no such joy and peace in *our* hearts, it may make us think, what deficiency is there in our religion ?

The Invisible World around us.

But if any books, however good, come to be the whole of your private devotions, you will go wrong. Your soul needs feeding, if it has been quickened into life. When our LORD had raised Jāirus' daughter, "He commanded that something should be given her to eat." And thus He commits the young Communicant to the Church, to be fed and nourished.

But this cannot be done by mere reading of devotional books. You must learn to read the Bible for yourself ; to pray for yourself.

Religious books are cramping, if we depend too much upon them. There is danger of becoming *unreal*—of saying what this or that holy man felt—not what *we* feel.



—The Invisible World around us.

IF there is a mysterious chord which binds together all the instrumentalities, by which the Almighty Father of the universe has uplifted the veil, and revealed the invisible world ; if there is a secret union which binds together God's revelation of Himself, through a Divine Saviour, through Divinely-appointed Sacra-

The Invisible World around us.

ments, through a Divinely-inspired Word, through a Divinely-commissioned Church, through a Divinely-ordered life of the saints, through the Divinely-arranged, though common-place events of our ordinary life --if, in all these different ways, God is standing in the midst of us ; and if, at the same time, it is a principle of the Eternal Counsels, that the knowledge of the invisible glory shall not be *forced* upon us—how much may we all be losing, if we are merely taking up our Bible as a matter of form, and not looking to see anything Divine, hidden beneath the difficulties of the outside !

What a renewal and transformation of our whole being we may be losing, by going to Holy Communion merely as a matter of duty now and then, and seeing nothing therein but bread and wine. How much we may be losing—we, who have been put into the Church of God, and made partakers of the glory of this new Jerusalem ; already, as the Bible tells us, brought near—*not merely to be brought near, in another world*—to the new Jerusalem, the heavenly Zion, made fellow-heirs with the angels and the whole company of heaven, surrounded by a great cloud of

Our Critical Position.

witnesses, with ladders reaching from earth to heaven, on which angels are ascending and descending ;—and yet, seeing in the daily life nothing Divine, nothing glorious !

What a revelation may we not be losing ! What utter discomfiture it will be to the most “advanced thinker” of the day, to find out that he has been all his life in the midst of God’s glorious Kingdom, with One standing amongst us whom he knew not ; in the Bible, in the Sacraments, in the Church, in the bank, in the counting-house, in the quiet home, in the letter-writing, in “the daily task,” the daily walk—everywhere ! “Lo, I am with you alway.” What utter discomfiture it will be, never to have discovered it, till we stand face to face before Him in the glory of His Second Advent.



—Our Critical Position.

WE are passing, now, through a very anxious and critical stage ; one of those great periods wherein a “remnant” is being gathered from the midst of the outward and visible Church. The line of demarcation has been so altered,

Our Critical Position.

that much which was once the Church is now the world. The tide of worldliness is gradually encroaching on us, and the little company are being gathered out of it by God ; out of a worldly Church a purified remnant is being prepared for the Coming of the LORD. In the Day of His appearing, we shall either be found in that remnant, or be left outside, like thousands of Jews who were counted unworthy of the Christian Dispensation. Our names will be seen remaining in the Lamb's Book of Life, or blotted out of it. Yes, as a remnant left from the Flood began the new Kingdom ; as a remnant out of the wilderness became the conquering army which entered triumphantly into Canaan ; as a remnant out of ancient Israel became the nucleus of the Christian Church ; so is it (oh, solemn thought !) in this our day ; Life and Death are being set before us.

We see then, how important it is to understand our position. The question is not merely whether we are very wicked, but whether the present dispensation, with the average life of those who "profess and call themselves Christians," contents us ; whether we are merely living according to the

Want of Spirituality.

ordinary light of the children of this generation. God raises up for us, from time to time, men who bring home to us the teaching of the Bible, who remind us that we may be keeping outward ordinances of religion and yet be at enmity with God. We may never be absent from a Sacrament, and yet we may be like the Jews, who were careful about keeping the Passover on the very day that the LORD was hanging upon the Cross, with the nails through His Sacred Hands. It is perfectly possible, now, "to crucify the Son of God afresh," and yet, in the eyes of the world, to be all the while living up to the religious standard of the age in which our lot is cast.



--Want of Spirituality.

Few things appeared to grieve our Blessed LORD more during His earthly life than the slow growth of His disciples in the knowledge of heavenly truth. We find signs of this sorrow again and again in the Gospels. We almost seem to *see* Him, with tears in His eyes, saying, "Have I been so long time with

Want of Spirituality.

you, and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip?" "How is it that ye do not understand?" "Are ye also yet without understanding?" It seems to have perplexed Him—if we may reverently use the expression; it seems to have grieved His Human Heart, that those whom He had chosen as His own Apostles and Evangelists should be so slow to apprehend the truths that He came to reveal.

And since JESUS CHRIST is "the same, yesterday, and to-day, and for ever," we can imagine that He is still grieved at the slow progress that we, His disciples in these days, are making in this same Divine knowledge.

There is something very sad in the way that we all live below our privileges. We live as if still in bondage under the elements of the world; as though we were still under the Jewish Dispensation.

For instance, if we want to persuade a man to give money, we have to appeal to the old Jewish law of "tithes"! The idea which possessed the early Church of gladly laying down their *all* at their SAVIOUR'S feet seems to have passed away!

. So also, as to the LORD'S Day. The idea of

The Second Advent.

those early Christians was simply joy that the world's claims upon them had ceased for a time ; that they were set free for heavenly things ; joy that they *might* keep Sunday. But now the question is "*May I do this or that ? How much of the LORD'S Day am I obliged to give to GOD ?*" We have returned to bondage !

If we want to startle a man out of his carelessness, we remind him that he must *die* ! We lose sight of JESUS coming in His glory. We say to the man—not "Prepare to meet CHRIST !" but "Prepare to die !" The very thing which CHRIST came to abolish—that hateful thing, Death, with all its loathsome associations—this we are obliged to bring forward as the motive.

It is otherwise in the Gospels. In them, all centres round the Person of JESUS CHRIST. . . . The early Christians never talked about "Death !" The thought of "dying" never darkened their minds.



—The Second Advent.

A TRAVELLER, on his way home from some far-off land, knows that the ship may be

The Second Advent.

wrecked. But although he prepares for death—though he makes his will in case he should die before reaching the shore—yet his one idea throughout the voyage is that of the ship safe in harbour, and the familiar faces on the shore of those who are waiting at home to receive him.

Re-union, not separation ! Joy, not sorrow ! This was the idea of all the early Christians, old and young. They were preparing, not to die, but to meet CHRIST at His Second Coming.

It helped them in temptation. "This cowardly act which I am tempted to do—how would it look if CHRIST came ?" "I feel tired and worn out—tempted to lose this opportunity of doing good ; but what if I should thus have *one soul less* to present to Him at His Appearing ?"

Those early Christians, in short, believed their LORD ! They knew that CHRIST had said He would come again ; so they trusted His word. On that hope they stayed themselves. With that hope they nerved themselves for martyrdom. The mother who saw her child thrown to the lions could say, "Only a little while, and CHRIST will be here, and we shall

The Promise of Christ's Coming.

meet again." There was something so practical about their belief! It gave them strength to conquer sin, and to "live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world."



—The Promise of Christ's Coming.

WHENEVER you are met by those enigmas of life which perplex many of our deepest thinkers in these days, remember "the Promise of His Coming!" "Yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry." "Be ye therefore patient; stablish your hearts; for the Coming of the LORD draweth nigh." "Judge nothing before the time, until the LORD come, Who will bring to light the hidden things of darkness." Say unto GOD, "O how wonderful art Thou in Thy works! How wonderful it will be, to see this enigma solved,—this perplexing aspect of Thy dealings made plain,—this mystery of iniquity explained! How glorious will it be, to see Order and Law, instead of a lawless world? Angels and Archangels, Principalities and Powers, in a wonderful

The Promise of Christ's Coming.

order; loving to obey, or ruling with temperate and loving discipline!"

"O the majesty of Law!"—was the thought of the great theologian Hooker, when he was dying. When those around him asked him what he was looking forward to, he said: "I look forward to seeing Law and Order reigning everywhere, in the new Kingdom of God."

When iniquity seems to abound, and the Church is divided, and heresies are increasing, then look up, and say: "O my LORD, I know that THOU art coming; for THOU didst foretell this. THOU didst say that when Thy Advent should be drawing near, the faith of Thy Church would hardly exist; that the love of many would wax cold. THOU hast told me that evil will never be crushed, until the Day dawn, and, instead of the withering blight of the dark shadow of Death, there shall be seen the light and the glory of Thy Advent Kingdom. O come then, LORD JESUS! Come quickly!"

And when you cannot think or feel or pray, or realize anything, or care about anything, at least *be true*. Do not say words to God that you do not mean. Be silent, but kneel

The Nearness of the Advent.

down and worship ; or simply say : " O GOD, help me to say, Come quickly, LORD JESUS ! "



—The Nearness of the Advent.

THE " signs of the times " are thickening around us. Hundreds of years, or twenty, or ten, or only so many days, or hours, there may be yet. GOD knows. But it certainly seems, to every thoughtful mind, that we have entered on the last epoch of this Dispensations.

The " lawlessness " foretold (2 Tim. iii. 1, &c.)—we see it on every side : among children, servants, subjects.

Again, we are told that when CHRIST actually comes, people will have left off expecting Him (St. Luke xvii. 26-31 ; 1 Thess. v. 3). They will have made up their minds that it is impossible He should return yet ; and only those who are living very near to GOD—only those who have learnt to realise His Coming, by many a solemn hour of meditation—will be expecting Him, and never was there a time when the idea of CHRIST's return was so much ridiculed as it is now.

The Nearness of the Advent.

If then, His coming may be so near, how many practical thoughts press on our minds !

How it cuts at the root of our selfishness ! The idea of accumulating money for our children, if not for ourselves,—what good will it do them, if CHRIST should come again soon ?

If every secret thought may so soon be disclosed, surely it is a pity to be so disturbed if others know our faults now ; surely it is folly to be so sensitive. They will know all in that day. Even if saved, we shall be wretchedly ashamed, I think, of having all our lives seemed so different from what we really were.

What comfort there is in the thought of His Coming. We are having a hard battle with Satan, and the world, and sin : but —CHRIST is coming ! Even if we seem to go on praying, unheard, for twenty or thirty years ;—even if the heart is saddened with partings, and the life is desolate. It is but the preparation of the heart for the great intercession, “Come, LORD JESUS ; come quickly !”

Does it not nerve us to work for CHRIST now, so as to bring with us a company of the

The Continual Presence of Christ.

saved to meet Him? Does it not teach us so to train our children as not to be separated from them on that day?

Would it be any joy to you, if CHRIST really came to-day? I am not asking if you feel ready to *die* to-day, you may shrink from that thought. But, if CHRIST came down visibly among us, now, and you saw His face as clearly as you see mine, would it—after the first moment of natural fear—be joy to you?



—The Continual Presence of Christ.

EVERY minute of your life, whether you will or not, is passed in the Presence of ONE Who knows all your thoughts, and Who cannot be trifled with. You may trifle with others—with your friends, your parents, your Minister, the whole Church;—but you cannot trifle with JESUS CHRIST. “Be not deceived; GOD is not mocked” (Gal. vi. 7). He sees you as clearly, now, as in that Day when “we must all appear (*i.e.*, be made manifest) before the Judgment-seat of CHRIST” (2 Cor. v. 10; Heb. iv. 13). Remember the *Living LORD*! But remember that He is also a *Loving LORD*.

God's Word Through Teaching.

He knows your heart ; He knows all your past history ; how, with some of you, years of carelessness have bound such chains of sinful habits about you, that you can never make your life what it might have been. But He forgives—fully, freely, and at once ! (Micah vii. 19).

Try, in the every day difficulties of your religious life, to believe this : that the LORD Whom you serve was not more near to St. Peter on the sea, or to Mary Magdalene in the garden, or to the penitent sinner in Simon's house, than He is to you. His Eye is on you ; His Heart is with you ; and He will comfort, help, and guide, according to your heart's need.



—God's Word Through Teaching.

IN the Church of God, there are many preachers. Manifold are their gifts ; manifold, also, their defects. Diverse is the mode in which they publish the Divine Message ; diverse, also, the spirit in which that message is received. "Great is the company of the preachers."

God's Word Through Teaching.

But it is the LORD who giveth the word. Behind every true prophet—in this century as well as in the first—behind every true prophet, yea, dwelling in his inmost heart, is the invisible GOD; GOD the HOLY GHOST.

Above all the conflicting utterances of this lower earth, amid all the discord of its wrangling crowds, we can listen for the calm Voice of Him Who is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. He alone can really provide for the needs of a fallen world, by Whom that world was created. He is the true King, for Whose Advent humanity is ever crying, in the dumb agony of its unutterable groanings. He is the great High Priest, Who, in the majesty of His unapproachable Godhead, can send into the heart the word of absolution and of blessing. He alone, in the depths of His human sympathy, can bear the travail of each soul into the Holy Place, and make intercession for us within the veil. He, too, as the true Prophet, still gazes, with an inconceivable compassion, on the great multitudes who are gathered continually in this House of Prayer. He watches them as they come

The Principle of Religion.

within those doors, and pass that sacred Font. It is He Who commands His people to sit down; it is He Who blesses the word of teaching, and gives it into the hands of His disciple, to set before them. And those who believe in the invisible presence of that Divine Prophet can be fed through any sermon, however feeble the utterance of the preacher.



—The Principle of Religion.

RELIGION consists not so much in any details of outward surroundings, as in a principle of life. There must be a centre, round which the life of everyone of us revolves. What is that centre? Is it self? Or is it CHRIST?

Whether we will or not—let self be first, and our sorrows will be multiplied; the shadows will deepen, as life advances, and the silver cord is loosed, and the golden bowl is broken.

But let CHRIST be the Centre, and joy shall be ours. The daily self-denial, the cross-bearing, the “manifold temptations”—these, of course, will remain; the dark, weary

Epiphany Teaching.

hours, the subtle temptations, the crushing sense of failure. But in the midst of all this, a power of God shall be secretly revealed, which no words can describe.

There will be strange glimpses, also, through that open Door, and echoes from that Crystal Sea; voices to cheer us on the upward march; the voices of those who have gone before, and the Voice of our Crucified and Ascended LORD; the Voice of Him Who can make life happier as the shadows deepen; the Voice of Him Who holds the "roll" of the Future in His Own pierced hand; the Voice of Him Who loves us, Who can make His strength perfect in our weakness, Who can dry every tear, and nerve every feeble will, and send us back from that Eucharistic Feast, praising and blessing Him on earth, till we are called to praise and bless Him in Heaven for ever!



—Epiphany Teaching.

"EPIPHANY," we read in the Prayer Book, is "the Manifestation of CHRIST." The soul receives in faith what God manifests. A gift

Epiphany Teaching.

comes down from God ; and our part, in Epiphany, is to open wide the heart to receive it. Of course, the teaching that God may give to the individual soul is very different from that which He may communicate even to the brother or sister living in the same family. God gives to us, not as earthly teachers do, in a sort of general way, but according to the individual capacity of the individual soul to receive His heavenly teaching.

Sometimes, it may be, God reveals a new aspect of His Character ; that so, receiving that teaching, we may grow in wisdom. At another time, there is some new call—to some glorious privilege, or some magnificent effort that we can make for His glory and the good of His Church. And there comes a time of struggling—of holding back. “ I cannot ; I have not the courage ; I dare not attempt that ; it would be like St. Peter going out on the water, only to sink down, with the waves rising, and the wind roaring around my head. I dare not.” Then, the soul is driven to prayer, and to the Holy Table ; and it asks God, in the words of the Prayer Book, for “ ghostly strength,” and looks up to JESUS

Strength and Tenderness in Christ.

CHRIST as it eats the Bread and drinks the Wine ; and new life comes down, and the soul becomes strong. And so, at the end of the Epiphany-time, it says, "Thank God, I *can* ! I can and will bear it ; I will go forth in the strength of the LORD GOD, and say 'Amen' to this new revelation of the Father's Will."



—Strength and Tenderness in Christ.

WE find in the character of our SAVIOUR two qualities which are very rarely found on earth combined, but which, when found united in any individual, exercise an influence almost irresistible. I refer to the two qualities of *strength* and of *tenderness*.

The two are seldom united. Generally speaking, strength is looked upon as the mark of manhood, tenderness of womanhood. If we find a man infirm of purpose, with a weak wavering will, "everything by turns, and nothing long," devoid in fact of strength of character, we pity him. If we find a woman, —however clever and however able,—wanting in tenderness, we shun her. Our own poet

Strength and Tenderness in Christ.

has expressed the difference between man and woman in reference to this clearly and beautifully. You remember the passage. It is where he has been saying that "woman is not undeveloped man but diverse"; and then he describes it in that one line: "Perfect music, linked to noble words." Strong words;—soft music.

Now, we find in the LORD JESUS CHRIST—Who was not merely man or woman, but man and woman, perfect humanity, the crown of manhood, the perfection of womanhood—we find in Him the two, strength and tenderness. And it is this combination of gentle compassion with infinite power, that has made the Character of JESUS irresistible in every age and in every land; fulfilling the promise of the Incarnate One, "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men after Me."

O tender SAVIOUR, wounded unto death, and yet strong in the consciousness of an indomitable power, rolling on and on through all the ages of Eternity, Thou art strong enough to command our confidence, tender enough to win our love. Thou art One Whom we can take as our Leader and Commander, our Counsellor and Guide, wherever

The Divine Love and Fellowship.

we are, and whatever our circumstances ;— One Whose wisdom can never fail us, Whose power will never be vanquished ; One Who, on that “white horse,” shall lead us forth, “conquering and to conquer”: and yet so tender, so gentle, so ready to forgive ; whispering into our ears, as we lie down weary with the long, hard struggle against the world and the flesh and the devil, “Come unto Me, all ye that are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.”



—The Divine Love and Fellowship.

“I AM the Good Shepherd, and know My sheep as the Father knoweth Me, and as I know the Father.” Try to lay hold, if you can, by the power of the HOLY GHOST, of the deep import of these words. Have you ever, in a quiet hour of meditation, imagined what the love of GOD the Father must be for the Son in Whom He is well pleased ? Have you ever tried to think what is the response of that perfect humanity and perfect God-head of the Incarnate LORD to the love of the Eternal Father ? With reverence let us dwell upon

The Law of Acceptance.

that companionship, that intimate friendship, that personal love, that eternal affection which exists between GOD the FATHER and GOD the SON. Then remember that, in plainest words, in language that a child can understand, He, who is the Truth, has told us in words of truth that, such as the love of the Father is for the Son, such as is the love of the Son for the Father, such (and nothing less) is the love that the LORD JESUS CHRIST feels for you and for me. Such is the personal friendship, the intimate companionship, the undying affection, which shall one day (thank God !) be kindled in our hearts, when we shall stand around the Crystal Sea, looking up into the face of Him Whom to know is to love. "I know My sheep and am known of them, even as the Father knoweth Me and as I know the Father."



—The Law of Acceptance.

It is the will of GOD that we should always depend, for our acceptance with Him, upon a Person,—the LORD JESUS CHRIST: upon an act of that Person,—His Death on Calvary The

The Law of Acceptance.

symbol of that act is "the Blood of CHRIST"; and in the Bible this word "Blood" is used as an outward sign of that deep inner mystery which we call "the Atonement."

The mystery itself is beyond man's power to comprehend. But the pictures or illustrations of that mystery, given in the Bible, are so simple that none but the proud, or the self-righteous, can find any difficulty in apprehending the truth which they set forth.

1. Some parts of the Bible give us the Divine side of this Law, as, for instance, Isa. xii. and the parallel passages to be found in the marginal references; also Heb. viii. and Col. i. The promise given by God in the Old Testament is fulfilled in the New: "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." God, of His own free will, because He chose to do it, has made peace by the Blood of the Cross. In the Epistle to the Ephesians, again, this Divine side of the Law of Acceptance is especially set forth. The whole of the first chapter is one great revelation of God's Almighty purpose. He gave us this great Redemption, He blessed us with all spiritual blessings in CHRIST, because He chose so to do; it was "the good pleasure of His will";

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GOD was pleased to do it for His own glory.

2. In other parts of the Bible we see the human side of the same Truth. We read of souls, such as the Jews on the Day of Pentecost, or the Philippian jailer, crying out, "What must I do to be saved?"* We hear of others, "through fear of death, all their life-time subject to bondage"; † afraid to die, because they know they are not right with GOD, and therefore wanting to find out a way of salvation; and thus impelled, constrained, by GOD the Holy Spirit, through that inward necessity, to go on seeking till they are enabled to realise that the Blood of CHRIST "purges their conscience from dead works to serve the Living GOD." ‡ We are so constituted that we cannot feel happy, or fulfil the purpose of our creation, until we have found rest for our souls in JESUS CHRIST; any more than we can live without food and exercise, or safely neglect any of the laws of bodily health.

There is one verse in St. Paul's Second Epistle to the Corinthians in which we find these two sides of GOD's Law, the human and the Divine side, united. "All things are of GOD, Who hath reconciled us to Himself by

* Acts xvi. 30.

† Heb. ii. 15.

‡ Heb. ix. 14.

Our Justification. ¶

JESUS CHRIST." Here you see the Divine side ; the act of reconciliation has been accomplished. And then the Apostle beseeches us not to remain in darkness and bondage, but to let this Law of Reconciliation have free course in us and be glorified: "We pray you, in CHRIST's stead, be ye reconciled to GOD."

The result of this reconciliation is that we enter into the Life of Justification ; we are "justified by CHRIST's Blood."



—Our Justification.

GOD the Father's Mercy is the originating cause of our Justification ; CHRIST's death, the meritorious cause ; the HOLY GHOST, the effectual cause ; Baptism, the instrumental cause ; Faith, we may call the conditional cause.

In His own great Love, GOD puts a child at its Baptism into the new Jerusalem, the city of the living GOD, the heavenly Kingdom ; He joins that child to JESUS CHRIST, making him a partaker of all the blessings purchased by the atoning Death and the Resurrection of our LORD. Our part is this :—to take for granted that what GOD has said about that

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child's position is true ; that the HOLY SPIRIT will prepare that child to receive GOD's truth, if we simply give it ; and therefore to give him the highest teaching at once. We must always keep this idea before us in dealing with little children—that GOD, Who is true, has chosen to give us a free unmerited salvation ; that GOD elected us ; that it has pleased Him, of His own free grace, to call us unto a “state of salvation,” for which we must heartily thank Him ; and that GOD, in answer to diligent prayer, will go on giving us grace, in our after life, to continue in that state of repentance and faith unto our life's end. If only we begin soon enough, and treat a little child thus from the very beginning as “the child of GOD,” he will receive the deepest mysteries of the faith as a matter of course. This is one way of laying hold of the truth, and it is the best way.

But we may lay hold of it also entirely from the other side. We find out that we are wicked ; we grow wretched ; we are afraid to die. A sermon perhaps rouses us ; we make resolutions, we fight and fight for years, and then at last, in despair, we say with St. Paul, “Who shall deliver me from the

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body of this death?" And then the Holy Spirit, Who all the while has been dwelling and working in the Church, and watching us, opens out to us the meaning of the Cross, and the Blood of CHRIST, and all the teaching of the Atonement.

"I believe in the forgiveness of sins." "I heartily thank GOD that He hath called me to this state of salvation, through JESUS CHRIST our SAVIOUR." We believe that GOD has given to us One Who has died, and risen again, not as a SAVIOUR in appearance only, for sinners only in name ; but as a real SAVIOUR of real sinners ; a living SAVIOUR, given by a living and true GOD. And so, having realised our own sinfulness and CHRIST's Atonement, we rise up from beneath, as it were, into the same position that we ought to have accepted as little children from above, at the beginning.

But in whichever way we take hold of it, the great truth itself is always the same. GOD looks upon us as accepted in JESUS CHRIST. Our part is simply the receiving.



The Guiding Principle.

—The Guiding Principle.

"SEEK first the Kingdom of GOD." This is to be our guiding principle. And this, in its application to daily life, will be :—So far as possible, in arranging our occupations and pleasures (for *both* may be committed to GOD), to consider *first* : What portion of the day can be, and ought to be, given to GOD, that we may speak to Him, and listen to Him?

We may fail, again and again, in trying to carry out this principle : but we must never give it up. When we have failed, we must honestly confess it, bring it to Him at once, ask Him to wash away the sin, and then begin the next day in a better, holier, more humble spirit.

In all your plans, then, remember the great principle on which they must be formed and carried out : "Seek first the Kingdom of GOD."

Half our troubles come from not doing this. For instance : you go out to stay with friends, or to spend the day, and you leave it all to *chance*, as to what is to become of your prayers ! And so, if you have learnt the

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value of prayer—you are miserable : you do not find the pleasure you expected, and you think you have lost your hold of GOD.

Now if you were just to take *five minutes over-night*, quietly to think : “To-morrow, I shall be called at such an hour. My train (if you are going to travel) will start at such an hour. Could I get five minutes beforehand? Yes. Could I not get ten minutes? Yes, I think I could. And then at night? I shall be tired. But could I not find a few minutes for GOD on my journey, quietly, without anyone observing it?”

There is so much want of common sense and planning, in our religion! Five minutes reverently spent in this way, over-night, will save you much disquiet and misery : it will often spare you the pain of wondering if you are among those who are Christians at home, and sinners elsewhere. We must be like the man of business who says : “I must hurry through this and that to-morrow morning,—I must arrange my whole day—so as to be free at night for that important meeting.”

The same principle can be applied, with obvious modifications, to the cases of those who are *obliged* to be much in society, and

Prayer.

return home late ; those who are nursing sick persons, &c.

Rules for the devotional life, though helpful in their place, must not be allowed to bring us into bondage. We must be willing at any moment, to give up the Rule for the sake of the Principle, when a clear call of GOD's Providence interferes with our usual plan. And as circumstances alter, and experience increases, you will alter your plans from time to time ; asking GOD's help in so doing.



—Prayer.

WHAT is included in "Prayer" ?

Five things :

1. Confession of Sin. There are things which you have done wrong. You have to acknowledge them to GOD, humbling yourself before Him, and looking up to CHRIST, as the Israelites looked up to the Brazen Serpent ; believing that in that Crucified One there is full and free forgiveness. He Himself gives us, as our measure of pardon, one with the other,—"*until seventy times*" ;—"*seven times in a day !*" (St. Matt. xviii. 21, 22 ; St. Luke

Prayer.

xvii. 4.) Surely, "He Himself will not do less.

2. Thanksgiving. Many are miserable, for want of realising their blessings. We ask for something ; and the answer comes, quietly, a day or two afterwards, and we quite forget that we had asked for it ! (See Acts xii. 12-16.) Often stop and thank God for all His mercies ; —for common mercies, such as all of us have received ; thank Him for "the means of grace," and for all the spiritual teaching which you have had ; not to speak of those mercies given to each of us, which others do not know, or which we do not know ourselves, as yet. "In everything give thanks." s

3. Praise. For what He *is* : not merely for what He gives. For His Power, Love, Holiness, &c. Praise is what the old saints in *former* days have always loved so much. It is what we are *now* taught to offer to God "day by day." Any who form their prayers on the model of the Church Prayers—which we should all try to do—will find how full they are of the spirit of Praise. And *hereafter*, when we shall have no need of Prayer, we shall *praise* God for ever.

4. Asking. In this, you cannot go too much into detail. You are coming to a

Prayer.

"FATHER." But He is kinder and better than any earthly father.

No little thing that the Sunday School child, or the youngest Communicant, has to ask from Him, is too trifling for Him to care about, though it may seem a trifle to others. For instance : help in overcoming some bad habit into which a young girl is apt to fall ; or help in bearing her little trials patiently ; or help in trying to make others happy, when she feels awkward and shy, and has nothing to say. God can give her thoughts and words at such times, as much as at Prayer, or at Holy Communion.

Tell God what is on your heart, even when you are only able to say : "My God, this is a trouble to me, and I don't know what to do." Tell God *simply*. An earthly father does not like his child to hide himself, because unworthy to come near ; he likes to have the child sitting on his knee, and telling him all his little troubles. And though we must not be so familiar with our heavenly Father, we must be as trustful.

5. Intercession. This means, "going between." It is speaking to God *for others* :— for our parents, our brothers and sisters, our

Recollectedness in Prayer.

servants, our friends, our fellow-candidates for Confirmation, our fellow-communicants afterwards; the Clergy; the whole Church of CHRIST.



—Recollectedness in Prayer.

IF you wish to get real good from Prayer, you must try, *before you begin*, to realise to Whom you are speaking; what you are going to do; what you have to ask, or to thank Him for. "Let not thine heart be hasty to utter anything before God." (Ecc. v. 2; Job xxiii. 4; St. John iv. 23, 24.) If we go straight down on our knees, and *begin to pray* ~~at once~~, without thought, we put ourselves into Satan's hands. Always pause for a moment, and *stand* before God, deliberately and reverently, *before you kneel down* in His holy Presence.

Pause, then, before you begin: gather your thoughts together: try to "shut the door," of your heart; and say to yourself, *before you kneel down* in His Presence: GOD is; GOD sees me—knows me—loves me;—GOD—the FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST. If you have only *three minutes* to spend in Prayer

Meditation.

altogether, one minute will be well spent in first realising that God "*is*, and that He is a Rewarder of them that diligently seek Him."

And pause again, if only for a minute, at the *end* of your Prayer. Stand once more, reverently, before God ; call to mind what you have asked of Him ; repeat some Promise, and say : " LORD, I believe ; help Thou mine unbelief," or : " Father, I thank Thee that Thou *hast* heard me, for I know that Thou hearest Prayer in the Name of JESUS CHRIST." Or repeat the Creed, thoughtfully and thankfully : or simply say : " Glory be to the FATHER, and to the SON, and to the HOLY GHOST."



—Meditation.

WHAT *is* " Meditation " ?

It is an effort made, under the teaching of the HOLY GHOST, to obtain for ourselves, or rather, to receive from God, some Lesson out of His Word.

The first thing to remember is this. The HOLY GHOST wrote the Bible ; *i.e.*, it was

Meditation.

written under His guidance (2 Pet. i. 21). Therefore, He alone can explain it to us.

Sometimes He takes a text and sends it, like a piercing sword, into the soul that has never yet lived up to its real life, though brought to CHRIST, it may be, twenty years ago. He makes us so realise our sins, that, at our next Holy Communion, we feel "the burden of them *intolerable*." At another time, He chooses a text, and uses it to cheer and comfort us :—to shew us how to bear some trial, or how to act under difficulties, or how to rise again after a fall. And sometimes, when we are utterly miserable, He puts fresh life into our hearts, by means of some old text that seems quite new to us, under His teaching.

If you will watch for His individual teaching—light and comfort, warning and conviction, reproof, correction, instruction in righteousness—day by day, you will find the truth of all this for yourselves.

But it is most important, for you who are just beginning this duty, that you should *be prepared for great difficulties*.

For a long time after you begin the habit of daily Meditation—perhaps all your life, you

Meditation.

will find continually that the time is gone, in *reverie*! Be prepared for this: do not be surprised, if no good seems to come out of your Meditation. You will meet with temptations; you will find your mind filled with wandering thoughts. They may be thoughts and plans about work for others—things so good, in themselves, that we cannot tell whether they come from God, or from Satan, “transformed into an angel of light.” Expect difficulties. “Fore-warned, fore-armed.”

Set apart a certain time for this work every day. For beginners, a quarter of an hour is enough.

Choose the most quiet time. The morning is best; it is more difficult to fix our attention later in the day.

Now for the work before us.

1. Before, or at the time, read the passage. Take the easier parts of the Bible, at first; e.g., a Parable or Miracle, or some short portion of the Second Lesson for the morning.

2. Kneel down, very reverently, and try to realise that you are in God's Presence. You can use the Collect at the beginning of the Communion Service, if not yet accustomed to pray in your own words. It is a good plan,

Meditation.

to take the Church Prayers, and alter them according to our own need. Then try to picture our LORD to your mind, in any way you find most easy, till all noisy thoughts are hushed, and your heart is really "still" (Ps. iv. 4).

3. Submit your will. Put yourself into His Hands. The secret of success, in Meditation, is to be content to have no comfort, and even no teaching—consciously—unless He wills. We must not snatch our daily bread from our FATHER's table, but quietly wait, and say: "*Give us this day our daily bread.*" "The eyes of all wait upon Thee, O LORD, and Thou givest them their meat—in due season." (Ps. cxlv.) Do not be disheartened if you get no comfort at the time, but say: "What could a poor sinner like me expect?" And then, go on calmly. Be like a child in an unknown country, holding the hand of a guide whom it trusts.

4. Picture the scene. For instance—take the story of the blind man near Jericho. Imagine him sitting by the wayside—under the waving palm-trees;—his hands on his staff. He hears the tramp of a great multi-

Meditation.

tude, nearer and nearer, and wonders what it all means. **They tell him.** He cries out for help. Hear that cry! How earnest it is! It reaches the ear of JESUS Himself. In vain do the people tell him to be quiet—he only cries the louder. See! JESUS is standing still. He is speaking to some one—sending some one to fetch him! Look at the poor blind man, rising up, almost thrown down by that long Eastern garment—then casting it aside, and led by the man who has come to fetch him. And now, he stands face to face with JESUS. Listen! What question is JESUS asking? And what does he answer? Another moment, and his prayer is heard!—those blind eyes are opened, and he sees everything clearly—sees JESUS Himself, and wishes never to lose sight of Him again! The crowd moves on—he moves with them—he needs no guide now :—he follows JESUS in the way.

5. Seek one lesson. Only one! If you find many thoughts springing up at once, pause, lift up your heart, and wait till the HOLY GHOST shows you *the* thought He wishes you to take. Be like a little child; come back again and again to your Guide, and grasp His

Meditation.

hand the more firmly, when you have been wandering.

6. Having got your lesson, speak to GOD for the rest of the time. Ask the HOLY SPIRIT to guide your affections and your will, and to give you words in which to tell GOD what you feel. Say to GOD, *e.g.* : "O my GOD, I have been so unhappy for some days, and now, Thou hast comforted me. I have felt like Bartimæus, left behind in the dusty high-road of life, and Thou hast called me to Thee, and shown me Thy marvellous Loving-Kindness. O how patient and gentle Thou hast been with me!" So shall we be led to Him, before the holy angels.

Or perhaps the HOLY SPIRIT may fix our attention on the words : "Casting aside his garment," and teach us to confess how often we have allowed earthly things to hinder our prayers, and then lead us to ask GOD for help to "lay aside every weight," and obey the call of JESUS.

And if you have *nothing* to say—if you can find no words—then kneel before Him silently, or simply pray : "Lord have mercy upon me ! Lord, help me !"

Make a note of the lesson learnt each day.

Bible-Reading.

And if, at the end of a month, you find that they have *all* been lessons of comfort, or *all* of warning, it is time to pause, and ask God to shew you the truth. There is something wrong. You are letting your own temperament interfere with God's teaching.



—Bible-Reading.

BEGIN by placing yourself in the Presence of GOD, the FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST. Say to Him, thoughtfully and reverently: "Thou, GOD, seest me." Or, "Speak, LORD, for Thy servant heareth!" "That which I see not, teach Thou me!" "Open Thou mine eyes, that I may see the wondrous things of Thy Law." (Gen. xvi. 13; 1 Sam. iii. 9; Job xxxiv. 32; Ps. cxix. 18.) Or you might use the Collect for the 2nd Sunday in Advent, or for St. Mark's Day, or for the 19th Sunday after Trinity; or any simple words of your own, confessing your need of GOD's help and teaching, and asking Him to give you that help and teaching.

Then read a portion of Scripture: a larger portion than you would choose for your

Bible-Reading.

"Meditation." For instance, the 2nd Morning Lesson for the day.

After a year at this, take the 2nd *Evening* Lesson : or, if you have time, the *two* New Testament Lessons for the day.

Take this thought with you in your Bible-Reading, whether in Church or alone : GOD is speaking to me. As, in Prayer, I speak to GOD, so, in His Word, GOD speaks to me. Keep this thought steadily in mind : GOD is speaking ; He is speaking to me : and you will be surprised to find how GOD Himself will teach you, in that day's Lesson.

Perhaps the teaching may come in the midst of a string of names ! In 1 Kings xvi. 33, for instance, it is said of Ahab : "Ahab did *more* to provoke the LORD GOD of Israel to anger, than all . . . that were before him." It may set you thinking : What *was* it in Ahab which provoked GOD so much ?

Again, in Acts xx. 13, in a parenthesis, we find the words : "Minding himself to go on foot." You will find a whole lesson drawn from these words, in his "Introduction to the Study of Holy Scripture," by Dean Goulburn. He brings it out quite simply ; suggesting how St. Paul felt his need of being *alone*, and

Rules for Bible-Study.

probably planned this solitary walk on purpose to secure an opportunity for quiet prayer and meditation.



—Rules for Bible-Study.

THERE are many ways of studying the Bible.

1. Study a portion, and by degrees extend it. Take our LORD's Life on earth, to begin with : then, the early Christian Church : then, the Jewish Church, out of which it sprang. Trace the plan and purpose of GOD, from the beginning.

2. Begin with a general view, and fill in portions. Read, first, of the call of Abraham—then his training,—his private life—family life—and (in his descendants) national life. Then, the Wilderness life :—how the children of Israel were brought to a living sense of the Living GOD as their Ruler : how they were planted in Canaan—intended and trained to be missionaries to the Gentiles ;—but rejected their vocation. Then, the *Christian Church* became missionaries. GOD took the few believing Jews ; formed a Church, by Holy Baptism, and then, in an ever-widening

Rules for Bible-Study.

circle, the great work of that Church was carried on, to our own age. (Acts i. 8.) Then learn, as you go on with this Bible-study, how you yourselves are part of this great Church—to be used, if you *will*, as Witnesses for CHRIST everywhere, by your lives and words.

3. Cultivate the habit of learning Scripture by heart. At least, learn one verse of Holy Scripture every day. Use your memory for GOD; and ask Him to strengthen it in the using. (St. Luke xix. 15, 16.) It is dishonouring to GOD, if we store the memory with man's words—however true and beautiful—and neglect to fill it with the Word of GOD. (2 Tim. iii. 15; Ps. cxix. 11.)

4. Study your Bible with the Marginal References. Follow a word through the whole Bible: with the help of your Concordance, if you like.

Observe the various senses in which the same word is used. For instance: "Children of GOD." (1.) All created beings. (2.) All that are linked to Him by Holy Baptism. (3.) All that have responded to that Love, in a deeper sense. (4.) Those who have exchanged thralldom for perfect trust. (5.) "The children of the Resurrection."

Rules for Bible-Study.

5. Look at Contexts. How often we hear texts quoted—*mis*-quoted—without reference to their context! You would never dream of dealing thus with any *human* book—prose or poetry. Imagine Tennyson's "Two Voices," read in *fragments* like this! It is only the BIBLE that people treat in this careless way.

For instance: Is. xxx. 7. "Their strength is to sit still." Study the context, and you will see it has nothing to do with the theories which it is often quoted to support. The *real* argument conveys just the *opposite* meaning!

Again, in St. John iii. 7: "Ye must be born again." This was not spoken, at first, with reference to Conversion. There are numbers of texts which *do* teach Conversion, as plainly as possible; but our Lord's words to Nicodemus do not refer to this—at all events, not *directly*.

So again, in Ecclesiastes: how often we hear sentences quoted by themselves, which thus convey quite a wrong idea. This book *really* describes the struggles of the king, trying in different ways to find happiness in the *world*, and by degrees coming to a better mind.

Rules for Bible-Study.

One more instance : Numbers⁶ xxxii. 23. "Be sure your sin will find you out." The text is often quoted, but the *context* is seldom considered. The story from which it is taken conveys a wonderful lesson to Christians that are content to enjoy their own spiritual privileges, and leave their brethren to take care of themselves. The "Sin" here condemned, is that *spiritual selfishness* which can sleep while souls are perishing !

6. By degrees, it will be very interesting to gather together, by the help of the Holy Spirit, *Principles* for the Christian life, from Old Testament *Rules*. St. Paul gathers the Principle, that God's Workers are not to be starved, from the Old Testament Rule : "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn." (Deut. xxv. 4 ; 1 Cor. ix. 9-11.) There are many little Rules like this, in the Old Testament, which let light in on the Eternal Mind and Will of God.

7. Or try to learn from your Bible *different sides* of His Eternal Truth. God gives us both sides :—neither can be ignored. Yet it is almost impossible fully to realise and unite *both*. For instance :

(1.) Election and Free-Will. Everything

Rules for Bible-Study.

is of God. This comes out clearly in the Bible. Yet—Freedom of Will is equally clear. Accept *both* truths. Get what teaching you can, from both. Leave it to God to reconcile them.

(2.) The Means of Grace. Some Christians seem to see no special good in Baptism, or in Holy Communion. Bible-Reading, and private Prayer, or Prayer with Christian friends, is all that they care for. To others, again, the Sacraments appear the *only* channels of blessing. Yet God has revealed both sides of Truth.

(3.) Baptism and Conversion. The truth of our privileges by Baptism is as clear as possible, in the Bible. Yet the need of *Conversion* is equally clear. We may think that we see a way in which to reconcile the two truths. At all events, both are in the Bible, and God can harmonize them.

(4.) So also, as to the use and abuse of the individual help of a Clergyman. Some say : "I need none but God," &c. Others seem to be able to do nothing without their Clergyman ! They are always running to him, in every little matter. Both of these views are *exaggerations of truth*. In the Bible we find a

Self-Examination.

distinct recognition of the ordinance of the Ministry, as the channel through which the blessing is usually given. Yet, still more clearly, we see that Christians can draw near to our Lord Himself as near as Mary at Bethany—without *any* earthly help. *Both* are truths. The practical problem is, how to use without abusing:—how to take what God gives us through His Minister, yet not so as to forget the SAVIOUR Himself.



-- Self-Examination.

At some time in the year, *review your spiritual state*. You will find "Questions for Self-Examination," to help you, in many books now published. Or examine yourself as to *special* sins—Pride, Temper, &c. ; or test your life by the Ten Commandments. At least *once a year*, during Lent, let there be this *general* Self-Examination.

For *ordinary* Self-Examination,—daily, or before your weekly or fortnightly Communion, *make your own questions*, from books, according to the time at your disposal. Take out of any book which you are using, those points

Method of Self-Examination.

which you find touch your *own* heart and life the most sensitively. Add to them by degrees, as you learn to know yourself better.

Some points for daily Self-Examination will be obvious :—*e.g.*, Did you get up, at once, in the morning? If not, *why* not? Did you give up the day to God, on first rising? Did you give the right time to Prayer?—if not, what was the reason?—such as could be given to the All-loving SAVIOUR? That Temper which some of you are struggling to conquer,—has it been kept down? That Pride of yours,—has it been checked, when some new fault has been found in you? Have you been flippant—allowed your spirits to run away with you? Have you been too reserved—thinking of yourself too much? Have you said your Grace reverently? Have you tried to make others happy? Have you been kind to children? &c.



—Method of Self-Examination.

SOME find it helpful to *divide* the day's

Method of Self-Examination.

Self-Examination, and note down these things at *each* time of Prayer. Use your own judgment in this.

Others, who are weary at night, have found it useful to give the time after tea, or before dressing for dinner, to Self-Examination and Prayer; and before going to rest, merely to read a few verses of Scripture, and to commend themselves and others to God. For many people torture themselves at night because they "cannot get near GOD," when they are simply *overtired*. They would be no better able to translate a difficult book!

Others, again, find it a good plan, when pressed for time, to *substitute* Self-Examination for their usual Meditation, once a week; so as to go over the sins which they have noted down during the week, and ask themselves a few more questions than at their daily Self-Examination.

Look into yourselves. "Search and examine your own consciences,—and that, not lightly, and after the manner of dissemblers with GOD"—"by the rule of GOD's Commandments,"—your Duty to GOD and your neighbour.

Do this calmly, as in the sight of GOD.

Methòd of Self-Examination.

You are GOD Almighty's children. He Himself has broken down the barrier. He "*hath* reconciled us to Himself by JESUS CHRIST." (2 Cor. v. 18-21.) When He washed away your sin, He said, as plainly as He could say: "You must *trust* Me."

Trust Him, then, at *all* times. If deeper trials yet await you, in the work of your sanctification, *trust* Him still. We *must* have dark hours. What should we do in the hour of Death—when we may be only able to say Amen to the prayer offered by another, if we have not been taught to cling to CHRIST in darkness, during days of health? We *must* be taught and trained through *darkness*.

Be calm, therefore. Believe that GOD loves you. He desires—far more than you do—that CHRIST should be formed in you—His Holy Image reflected in you. And the power of the HOLY GHOST, Who has begun the good work in you, is far greater than the inward hindrances, and the outward circumstances of trial and difficulty, by which you are disheartened.



Intercession.

—Intercession.

MANY people ask our prayers : and many, who do *not* ask them, need them still more. Public things also need our prayers. The list increases as we grow older, and the mind enlarges in spiritual things. Intercessory Prayer is a real *work* ; none the less real, because silent and unseen.

Study St. Paul's teaching in 1 Tim. ii. 1-6, and you will see the importance and the reality of this work of Intercession, and the spirit in which it should be done.

Do not forget the "*giving of thanks*," which he teaches us, here, by precept ; and elsewhere, by example. (2 Thess. i. 3-11, &c., &c.)

"In everything, by prayer and supplication, *with thanksgiving*, let your requests"—for others as well as for yourselves—"be *made known unto God*." (Phil. iv. 6.)

And then, "the Peace of God . . . shall keep your hearts and minds"—as regards others, and not yourselves only—"through CHRIST JESUS." He is the "One Mediator" ; His Intercessions alone give force to ours ; we do but join the stream of those ceaseless

Intercession.

Intercessions, when we try to pray one for the other.

Shew that you believe in the power of our LORD's Intercession, by pleading, in His Name, for others, at times when you feel utterly cold and lifeless.

"Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving," even when your prayers for others seem unheard. Do not be surprised if, after asking a special blessing for any soul, something comes which seems to blast all your hopes. When you have grown older in prayer, you will often—I do not say, *always*—find that such things were *the beginning of the answer!* GOD is trying your faith: He waits, perhaps, to see if you will go on praying. (St. Luke xviii. 1-8; St. Matt. xv. 21-28.)

Believe, then, in the *reality* of Intercessory Prayer. Be *humble*;—remembering that by no power or holiness of your own you can gain blessings for others. Be *definite*, that the precious time given to this work may not be wasted. Be *thankful*—for all that GOD has done, for others as well as for yourself, already.

And be *persevering*. "In due season

Day by Day.

if there is an opportunity, our mouth will speak of God's righteousness, and of His salvation (Ps. lxxi. 15). Day by day, when we can, we will go to His temple (Acts ii. 46, 47), we will magnify, and praise, and thank Him. Day by day, we search the Scripture, as the noble Bereans did (Acts xvii. 11). Day by day, as the Lord has taught us to do, we take up our cross (S. Luke ix. 23); we forgive and love; taking care that the sun does not go down on one unkind thought wilfully indulged (Eph. iv. 26). Day by day, as we have opportunity, following the example of the early Christians, we minister to the poor (Acts vi. 1), in body, mind, and spirit, giving such things as we have, to the servants who feel tired and lonely, to those who have not been taught as much as we have, to those who are poorer in any way than ourselves; teaching and preaching JESUS CHRIST, according to opportunity, by our life and by our words (Acts v. 42); day by day dying, as S. Paul did; day by day renewed, as S. Paul was (2 Cor. iv. 16).

"Thou knowest not what a day may bring forth" (Prov. xxvii. 1). There is the warning;

Poor Beginnings No Cause for Despondency.

we know not what temptation, what unexpected trial, may be coming. But never let us think of it only as a warning, for our GOD is a generous, giving, loving GOD, Who changes the water into wine, and turns death into life. We know not what surprise of joy may be waiting for us, what grace, or what unexpected blessing. Day by day we say the LORD's Prayer and receive the Daily Bread; either in actual Communion, or in spiritual feeding on Him Who is the Bread of Life. Day by day we "shew the LORD's Death till He come" (1 Cor. xi. 26). And so, too, the pillar of cloud will go on, day by day (Exod. xiii. 21), and we may boldly say, "The LORD is my helper, I will not fear."



—Poor Beginnings No Cause for Despondency.

SOMETIMES our hearts fail, because of the taunts thrown at us: It is a great pity that good people are so silly. It is a great pity that good people do such stupid things. What a pity it is that the *clever* men seem not to be believing as much as they did!"

Poor Beginnings No Cause for Despondency.

And it *is* a great pity, for these clever men—as they will know hereafter—to have had a magnificent gift, and not to have laid it at the feet of the King of kings! It *is* a great pity, if the poor teachers and visitors do foolish things;—though I do not know that they do more foolish things than other people. It *is* a great pity, if the men and women who are openly known as religious, in the parish, are often inconsistent,—if they be.

But, if you go back to the history of Corinth, and study the ancient annals of the Church, you cannot have a worse beginning than they had. Even if you believe all that the world says against those who acknowledge CHRIST and cast in their lot with Him, now, they cannot be less likely to influence mankind than was that little band of slaves, and of converted drunkards and covetous people, gathered together at Corinth. And yet, that little band went out to work for GOD, because they believed that GOD was in them. They believed that they had an electric power, a supernatural force, a calm, steadfast strength which needed no crying aloud in the street, no striving for the foremost places,

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because it was certain to triumph in the end.

And what was the result? The oracles of Greece and Rome became dumb. The great shrines of Heathendom crumbled into dust before the Cross of the Nazarene, before the spiritual weapons of the Crucified.

Surely, then, there is no need to despair. If God only gives us faith, we shall be "more than conquerors through Him that loved us." We shall be brave enough to conquer the world, if only we will stand shoulder to shoulder, believing in God the FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST, and resolve not to mind if the externalism of our life does seem a little foolish, a little mistaken; marred by human failure, or tarnished by human misrepresentation.



—The Higher Christian Life.

It is obvious, as our starting point, that we, as Communicants, have the choice of living either a higher or a lower life.

But here, let me guard you against a misconception. Satan has two ways of deceiving mankind: by denying God's Truth, or by

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substituting a counterfeit. He persuades us that some great Truth of God's Word, which God intended us to lay hold of, and to assimilate in our inmost being, is but a figment of our own imagination ! Or else, if unable thus to make us believe that God is untrue, he presents to us some counterfeit of that great reality.

So is it, in reference to this truth of the "higher life." Satan persuades some souls that there is no such thing ; they ask : "What do you mean by it ? What can I do, more than I am now doing ?" And then comes the well-known recapitulation of the ordinary duties of morality, with the coping-stone of an occasional Communion !

But if he has failed to persuade us that there is no reality in that higher life of which God speaks, then he offers a counterfeit. He takes some outward relation of life, some external condition ; for instance, those who are living in Sisterhoods, those who have no earthly ties ; and he says that only those who are living in that outward condition are living the higher life ! This is simply a delusion.

The poor worn mother, with her many children, and no servant to lighten the daily toil ;

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the worried man of business, perplexed on every side ;—such as these, unable sometimes to snatch an hour, or even a few minutes, for prayer, can be kept by GOD, not merely safe, but living the highest life that is possible here on earth.

And, on the other hand, no outward assumption of a garb, no outward separation, can accomplish that which can only be wrought by the inward working of GOD the HOLY GHOST.

GOD the Blessed SPIRIT, speaking through the Bible, tells us that he lives the highest life, who has most learned to merge the human will in the Divine ; to count nothing “common” ; to despise no daily drudgery ; to “do all in the Name of the LORD JESUS.” He lives the highest life, upon whom CHRIST has the most clearly stamped the lineaments of His own Divine Countenance. He lives the highest life, who has best learnt the teaching of the Divine Master : “Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister ; even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His Life a Ransom for many.” He lives the highest life, who, moment by moment,

Gradual Progress.

has fellowship with God, and manifests to men and to angels "the fruit of the SPIRIT,"—the "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance,"—of which the Apostle speaks. Manifest these, if you would live the highest life!



—Gradual Progress.

OUR work is to rise above the average standard, now. The Communicant who is living merely according to the natural life is satisfied with the standard of the age in which he lives; he feels no need of anything higher. But the Communicant who is in the inner fellowship of the saints is filled by the Spirit of God with a Divine hunger for that glory which shall be more fully revealed hereafter, but which is already around him, and resting upon him, and in him. As we recognise these marks of the life of the Blessed Ones, and seek to fashion our own lives after them, we cannot rest contented with merely the form of Christianity which has been developed by the circumstances of this nineteenth century!

(Gradual Progress.

Observe, we do not ignore the natural : for GOD is the GOD of nature, as well as of grace. We do not despise the ordinary level ; GOD forbid ! Who are we, that we should despise any work of GOD ? Probably, many whom we think mere ordinary Christians will be far beyond us, in the Day of the LORD'S Appearing.

And we do not presume to think that we can rise by one sudden effort, to that higher life. Many whom I have known have attempted it, desiring to be at the top of the spiritual ladder at once ; not called by GOD : and the fall has been an awful fall. I remember one who told me how he had learned to live almost without any self-examination — almost without a Bible or prayer—he was in such perpetual communion with GOD ! And that man fell : and by his fall, numbers of Christians were for a time almost shipwrecked.

No. CHRIST taught the truth ; He Himself was “the Truth” ; and He said that in the new Kingdom there would be thrones, but that the way to those thrones was to go, first, as He Himself did, to the lowest place. “He that humbleth himself shall be exalted.” “Go

Gradual Progress.

and sit down in the lowest room," and He shall come and say to thee, "Friend, go up higher."

We cannot rise to the highest life at once. There must be frequent Communion, and quiet days, and silence, and solitude, and self-restraint, and works of love—*little* acts of love, if we would attain unto it. We must take care not to despise—not to leave behind us—what God has revealed to the mass of Communicants. We must pass through it, and embody it on the way. "Covet earnestly the best gifts"; but remember, without Charity, all is a delusion.

1. Restful Dependence :— the spirit of the man who has passed through mere activity and exertion of his natural powers, into restful dependence upon God, hour by hour. He still exerts himself; he still uses the natural powers that God has given him; but he has entered into the life of the Blessed Ones, and drinks of their spirit—restful dependence upon God.

2. Contemplation of God :—the spirit of the man who has passed through mere "religious work," the mere bringing of natural energy to bear upon religious mate-

Christian Manliness.

rials, into the spirit of calm and loving contemplation of the Invisible God. He still works ; he is still in the midst of religious activity, if God so will ; but his life is "hid with CHRIST in GOD." The inner centre of his being is a loving contemplation of GOD.

3. Patient waiting and looking for the coming of CHRIST:—the spirit of the man who is "looking for and hasting unto the Coming of the Day of GOD" ; patiently waiting for the Advent of JESUS CHRIST. He may be still interested in everything here : in home, and children, and friends ; in politics, and science, and art ; in societies, and organizations, and all the outward mechanism of the Church. But he knows that the only "life" worthy of the name is that Eternal Life which is begun now, and which shall be fully manifested in that Day when the sign of the Son of Man shall be seen in the heavens.



—Christian Manliness.

THE world tells us, with one of its half truths, that the effect of religion is to make men into women. We deny it. Men who are only

Christian Manliness.†

half Christianised do become effeminate, it is true ; because they have drunk in only enough of religion to gain holy fear, without having gained sufficient to make them the triumphant conquering sons of GOD. But the full effect of religion is the very opposite, it makes women, as well as men, in the true sense of the word, manly ; as we see by the injunction, "Quit you like men." Or rather it makes them like CHRIST, Who combined the perfections of manhood and womanhood, and was the Perfect Representative of humanity.

In the glorious description which the Revelation gives of the triumphs and sufferings of the Church, we are told that she brings forth a "man-child" ; and the word "man" brings before our mind the idea of force, power, strength, and victory. The LORD Himself was called a blasphemer, a traitor, beside Himself ; but all the time that to the world He appeared to be crushed beneath its feet, He was nevertheless conquering it, in a way that we cannot yet fully realise. So now, through the silent course of the Church's history, through our silent individual struggle with the world-spirit, as it reveals itself,

† Restful Dependence.

either in consecrated homes, or in the gayest sections of Society, or wherever our lot may be cast, there, wherever the battle is being fought, one by one, come forth the "men," the heroes. And soon there shall be seen Heaven opened, and He Who sitteth upon the white horse, the faithful and true, will come forth no longer alone, but with armies that follow Him "upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And He hath on His vesture and on His Thigh a Name written, KING of Kings and LORD of Lords."



—Restful Dependence.

OBSERVE, Restful Dependence is quite different from sloth. And it is quite different from a mere easy-going temperament. We are to "labour"—to bestir ourselves, to take trouble—the word almost implies haste—in order to "enter into that Rest" of which the Apostle speaks, in Hebrews iv. 11. This spirit of "Restful Dependence" is an inward Rest which in most cases is brought out of great effort, great struggling. The nature that enters most completely into this spirit

Restful Dependence.^f

of restfulness, is that of the active energetic man, when disciplined and led by the Spirit of GOD ; such as St. Peter, to whom our LORD said : " When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest ; but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee and carry thee whither thou wouldest not."

It is a Rest which enables us to work : not apart from GOD, but in harmony with GOD. And so, there is no waste of force, as there is when we work in merely the natural way. How much time you and I have wasted, through not working in this restful spirit ! Perhaps we resolved to save a soul which GOD did not choose to save by our instrumentality. Or we have rushed from place to place, feeling that something *must* be done and that we must go and do it, ourselves, that very moment ! And afterwards we found, that if only we had first knelt down and committed it to GOD, the work would have been far better done. We should have had GOD with us, next day, or whenever GOD's time had come ; whereas, on that day, when we ran about so quickly, we were working by ourselves ; and of course the Finite cannot

Restful Dependence.

do as much as the Infinite; man cannot accomplish as much as God.

It is a Rest which springs from Dependence on GOD; and that Dependence springs from Faith; and that Faith springs from a knowledge of GOD, as revealed in Holy Scripture.

Look at that calm, restful body, and dwell awhile in fellowship with that spirit, resting from its labours; and then pause and say: "Return unto thy Rest, O my soul! Imitate those who are now inheriting the Promises. Live as the glorious Company of the Apostles and all the Saints in Paradise are living now!"

Think of the Blessed Ones, till their quiet Rest shall seem, to come into your own troubled soul. Think of that glorious Sabbath which knows no ending! Think of that "sea of glass like unto crystal"; the very picture of all that is calm and still. Think of resting in the Garden of the LORD—in Paradise—with CHRIST. Think of the Blessed Ones, doubtless thinking of you, and praying for you, though you must not pray to them; longing, with a calm, restful, prayerful longing, for the breaking of that Day when, like

Christ an Example of Restful Dependence upon God.

the poor demoniac in the Gospel story, we shall have done with all our sinful folly, and shall be found on the shores of that quiet sea, sitting at our SAVIOUR'S Feet, clothed, and in our right mind !



—Christ an Example of Restful Dependence upon God.

MEDITATE with me for a few moments on some of His own blessed words. "My time time is not yet come : but your time is always ready." In other words : The moment a thing comes into your mind, you go and do it ; but My time,— the time appointed by My FATHER, is not yet come. I have not yet received My FATHER'S command to go to this Feast ; and without My FATHER I can do nothing, any more than a little child without the mother's help. "I live by the FATHER." "I have not spoken, of Myself." "The SON can do nothing of Himself." "I can of Mine own self do nothing." And again : "I will put My trust in HIM" ; as the true, perfect Man, fulfilling the Divine idea of the

Christ an Example of Restful Dependence upon God.

creaturely life. "FATHER, into Thy Hands I commend My Spirit": and this, not only when dying, but all through His earthly life.

And so, as we follow our LORD, we see Satan trying to hinder Him, in this life of Dependence on His FATHER; trying to persuade Him to act for Himself, without seeking His FATHER's guidance; to do the works of His own choosing. But we watch Him, resisting the devil, stedfast, unmoveable; on the one hand, refusing to be hurried into any premature act; and on the other hand, "when the time was come," stedfastly setting His face to go to Jerusalem, though shrinking back with such an unutterable agony of spirit that it was seen in His very Face, and "amazed" His disciples. "Jesus went before them: and they were amazed; and as they followed, they were afraid." As they looked on Him, they saw the inward conflict, issuing in entire Restful Dependence on His FATHER's Will. "The LORD GOD will help Me: therefore shall I not be confounded; therefore have I set My Face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed."

Watch HIM, when tossed and tempted, in

The Life of Contemplation.

this busy nineteenth century life ! “ We have not a High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities.” He knows what a bitter discipline it is, by which GOD makes a self-willed child of Adam say “ Amen ” to His dealings.

He knows, having Himself been tempted,—blessed be His name !—every assault of Satan. He knows all Satan’s rage. He knows how the devil lays hold of us, trying to make us impatient, to make us lose self-restraint ; to make us anticipate “ the morrow,” thus breaking the Law of the Kingdom, instead of abiding patiently in our GOD for to-day, knowing that the duties of to-morrow, if we live to see it, shall be revealed, and the grace given, when to-morrow comes. There is not a great crisis of our life, nor a little trial of the hour, that our blessed LORD, our Almighty SAVIOUR, has not tasted, drinking the cup to its very dregs.



—The Life of Contemplation.

To “ contemplate ” means, literally, to *survey* ; to mark out the ground, in the solemn way that the Romans used to do, for a temple of

The Life of Contemplation.

one of their gods. It is something different from merely looking at a thing, and passing on : it is a solemn gaze ; like St. Stephen's, when he "looked up stedfastly into Heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the Right Hand of God."

This is what the Blessed Ones in Paradise are doing ; and this is what we also are called to do. We are to "run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus." We are to "consider Him." We are to live the life of Contemplation.

Everyone, whatever the outward surroundings, may enjoy a certain measure of this Contemplation of God. It is the secret of true activity and endurance, in ordinary life. I have known a great mill-owner, who had to see, one after another, from morning till night, all the ordinary tiresome people of every class with whom such men have to deal. At first, it drove him nearly mad : but, by practising the life of Contemplation, all things became materials with which to feed that life ; so that in his busiest days he often received the greatest blessing, and was as happy as when quite alone with God, without the "distrac-tion" of his work !

The Life of Contemplation.

If you would only try to take ten minutes a day for this Contemplation of GOD, you would find what a pleasant and blessed thing it is. All busy men who have tried it have found the advantage of it. Try it, for one year! Take your Bible and Prayer Book, in your own room, away from the place where you write your letters and do your work. If you cannot find anything to say, to begin with, say aloud a few words out of your Prayer Book, or out of your Bible, such as some of the prayers that holy men used, when they spoke to GOD. Or if you feel as St. John felt when he lay at the feet of our LORD "as dead," only say: "O GOD, I can feel nothing, and I can do nothing: have mercy on me, for JESUS CHRIST'S sake. Glory be to the FATHER! Glory be to the SON! Glory be to the HOLY GHOST!"

Take care not to lay upon yourselves unnecessary burdens. Do not attempt more prayers than your time and strength allow. "He remembereth that we are but dust." "If there be first a ready mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not."

And above all, beware of a fidgety, fussy

The Ability which God giveth.

kind of religion. Do not be over-anxious. "Have I attained the higher life? How can I know whether I have?" &c., &c. A great saint was once asked, "How can I live the higher life?" and he answered: "My child, go and live the lower life, and God will teach you the higher life."

Practise Humility, while you pray God to fill you with the seven-fold gifts of the HOLY GHOST. Say to Him, over and over again, as you walk, or sit down, or wherever you may be, "I beseech Thee, O LORD, pour Thy Grace into my heart!" But be content to be the last of all, and the least of all. Do not be ill-tempered with yourself,—and even with God,—because you seem to be the last and the least of the saints. Never give way to that proud unbelief which sounds like humility: "I shall never be any better! I have put it off too long; I am too weak," &c., &c. Think of God, not of Self. Think what God is, and what God can do.



—The Ability which God giveth.

If we do our work according to our own

The Ability which God giveth.

strength, or because we have come to the conclusion that we are very wise, or learned, and know how to do it ; if we never really think of God at all, though we may use His Name in connection with the work ; if we act in this spirit, then the thought that is most prominent is, " I am going to do this work." But if we do it honestly, as in the sight of the All-seeing God, realising that just the amount of ability that God pours in during the next half-hour will come out in the work that we have to do ; then we understand that it is God alone who gives, it is God upon Whom it depends whether the windows of Heaven shall be opened upon that particular occasion or not. If we recognise the fact that God has the absolute control over each little bit of work, and the manner in which it is to be done ; that He has the absolute control of our prayer, of when and how it is to be answered, then God is put into His proper place, we recognise that He is God over all. " I am the LORD. Have I not the right to do what I will with Mine own ?" And we humbly make answer : Whatever Thou pleasest, O LORD ; not my will but Thine be done. It will be very hard to be a fool ; very hard to fail ; very hard to

Preparation for Lent.

think souls have been injured ; very hard to get no answer to prayer ; very hard, after being looked upon as an oracle, to be a stupid, foolish, stammering oracle ; very hard to be silent altogether, so far as others' profit is concerned. But, Amen ; not my will but Thine be done."

It must be one thing or the other ; progress of the flesh, or the Spirit ; man's progress, or GOD's progress ; whichever we like ; we cannot have both ; we cannot serve two masters. It must be the old nature that works, or the new ; self, or GOD ; there is no union possible between them.



—Preparation for Lent.

BEFORE Lent arrives, make up your mind to be *definite* ; set before yourself a definite aim and object.

The great defect, of Christianity, in the present day, is its vague and shadowy character. There is no definite knowledge of our own individual guilt, and of the power of the Blood of CHRIST ; there are no definite victories over any special sin ; no mile-stones

Try to Find Out your Sins.

passed, year by year ; there is very little, in short, of the spirit of St. Paul : " Forgetting those things which are behind,--I press towards the mark " (Phil. iii. 13-14).

How, then, are we to begin to be definite ?

We must begin by being definite in our Self-Examination. Unless we know something of ourselves, and something of our spiritual state, Lent will be of but very little use to us.



—Try to Find Out your Sins.

I SHOULD recommend those who are used to Self-Examination, to begin Lent by taking any ordinary set of questions for Self-Examination. Place yourself in the presence of God. Use some short prayer, such as, " Search me, O GOD. Shew me my sins, for JESUS CHRIST's sake." And then try to break up your life into portions, beginning with the portion nearest to you. Write down all that you can remember. The power of finding out your sins will grow wonderfully as you go on. The HOLY SPIRIT will come, with increased power ; and that which was at first

Tell your Sins to God.

a mere blank will stand out in definite lines of omission and commission. And yet, even then, numberless sins will still remain unremembered !

Those who are in the habit of self-examination should pursue the same plan ; but taking, instead of the whole life, a general examination of the time since they last examined themselves in this way—perhaps, since last Lent.

Think of your sins in the light of that love to God, and to men for God's sake, without which all good deeds are as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal.



--Tell your Sins to God.

IN the prophecy of Hosea (Hosea xiv.) you will find ample guidance for this part of your work. "Take with you words, and turn to the LORD." Put the confession into words.

At this point, there is offered to you, by the Church of England, the choice of two methods—one ordinary, the other reserved for more rare and special occasions.

Tell your Sins to God.

But, in one way or another, sin *must* be acknowledged,—put into words; it matters little how;—whether in the quiet of your own room, or alone with GOD in Church, or in the quiet Vestry, with one of GOD's Ministers to help you with the acknowledgment. In one way or the other, GOD *must* be honoured, and sin confessed.

As far as I understand the teaching of our Church, I should say that it *recommends* the confession to be made privately to GOD, but that it *offers* always the help which comes in acknowledging the sin to GOD before one of His Ministers.

Little it matters *how*; but it must be done. And no one who has not tried knows how Satan will put forth all his strength to hinder the acknowledgment of sin—how he will send distracting thoughts, &c. It seems so simple, yet it is so difficult; and Satan seems to say, “What good is it?”

This is the “good”: GOD has commanded it; and it brings down a blessing from Him. As our life lies thus spread out before Him, the HOLY GHOST co-operates with us, and works in us a deeper sense of sin, a more earnest purpose of renewed life—more holy

Lay Hold on the Atonement.

resolves—than we should obtain by a whole year's general and vague confession that we are "sinners."



—Lay Hold on the Atonement.

It is necessary to *lay hold, by an act of Faith, on the atonement of JESUS CHRIST*; to believe that GOD has been pleased to anticipate our guilt, and to lay it all on JESUS—so that, whenever we come back to Him, there is free forgiveness ready for us—for every sin of the past (Acts xiii. 38, 39). See, in the Bible, how GOD is longing to receive us! He does not wish us to work up *to* the Cross, but *from* the Cross.

Therefore, I repeat it, *Believe!* By an act of faith, touch JESUS CHRIST; lay hold—with all the power of your own individual will, for yourself,—of the unspeakable mercy that GOD scatters far and wide for all who will receive it. If your Lent does no more for you than this—if you merely acknowledge the guilt of your past life, and believe on JESUS CHRIST, it will be a well-spent forty days.

Sorrow for Sin.

—Sorrow for Sin.

To you that have seen your sin, and have believed on JESUS CHRIST, there comes, naturally, the wish to be sorry for sin.

Now, remember, we are quite unable to make ourselves sorry. If we were to think of our sins, and go over books of Self-Examination for twenty years, still, we could not make ourselves *love*, so as to sorrow for sin with true contrition of heart. It is the work of the HOLY SPIRIT.

But GOD gives us a distinct promise of this very grace (Zech. xii. 10). Take the story of the sufferings of JESUS CHRIST, or any touching part of His Life ; and, casting yourself on the HOLY GHOST, thank Him that His Blood was shed for you, and that you *are* reconciled to Him. Let the HOLY SPIRIT have your heart. He loves to witness to JESUS CHRIST. And as you think of the sufferings of JESUS, a strange feeling of softening will come over your spirit ; you will mourn for Him. And yet, the sorrow will be worth all the joy that you have ever felt in mere wordly amusements.



Amendment of Life.

—Amendment of Life.

TAKE some Collect—*e.g.*, the one after the LORD'S Prayer, in the Communion Office, or the first Sunday after Epiphany. Nothing will help you so much as taking a Collect like this, and expanding it for yourself, according to your own need ; dwelling on each word, and adding words of your own. It gives you the outline of what you ought to pray for, without the formality of a written prayer.

And then, take that book in which your sins are written down. Do it calmly and quietly. Do not let Satan say to you : "You are bad altogether ; it is hopeless." He hates what you are doing ; so he brings up a mist and a darkness, that you may give it all up. Everything in yourself may be bad, it is true ; but you have the HOLY SPIRIT working in you.

Look quietly over the past ; read what you have written down ; *e.g.*, consenting to what is wrong ; deceitful ways ; pride of birth, or of intellect ; want of sympathy with others ; undue love of popularity, and dependence on the opinion of others ; bad temper ; want of

Amendment of Life.

attention to relatives ; unguarded use of the tongue, &c. Ask God to help you in digging down into motives ; in finding out the *roots* of your sins.

After this, decide what sin specially tempts you at the present time. Do not take more than one, or two at the most ; and settle what sin specially to fight against, this Lent. Think of it for a day or two, before you make up your mind. *Do not be in a hurry.*

Leave the other sins, for the present ; and make up your mind that you will fight with that particular sin ; that you will have a hand-to-hand struggle with Satan over it,—relying on the help of the HOLY SPIRIT.

Be prepared for conflict. Satan is sure to tempt you, on that point, more than anywhere else. So do not be surprised, if, for the first week or two, you fail more than ever, at that particular point.

Remember, you are fighting with a living enemy. Never mind, if you fail more than ever. Each night, cast yourself afresh at the foot of the Cross, and start again, the next morning, as a free man, with the HOLY SPIRIT to pour new life into your heart for a fresh conflict.

Do Something for God.

Still going on—as Lent passes away—lift up the heart to God, and take some quiet time (on Sundays perhaps) to ask God what will have to be altered or amended in your way of life, after Lent ;— what habits or amusements will have to be given up ; what new habits will have to be learnt.

While fighting against the one special sin, look up to God for guidance on this point. And *an answer will come* ; quietly, in the way you least expect. It may be very disagreeable. Some one may be very unkind, and tell you of some fault, or some home truth, in a way that will make you very angry at the time. But when you come to think over it, you will find that it is the very thing which is marring your whole Christian character ! Although you never knew it, that is the weed which is choking all the flowers.



—Do Something for God.

IN proportion as the knowledge and love of CHRIST grow up in our hearts, more and more strong becomes the wish to make some offering to Him Who gave up His Life for us.

Do Something for God.

Great care and caution are necessary, before you decide on anything. Very often, the advise of a wise friend, or even of a physician, is needed. If Satan can persuade you to undertake something beyond your strength, he will. For he knows that he can come with tenfold power when the body is weak and the mind irritated through that bodily weakness.

I can only now give you a few simple instances of what can be done,—sacrifices that might be made.

Could not some of you have 'a box, and put aside for God's service anything saved from your usual enjoyments and pleasures—from things quite harmless in themselves, but curtailing your powers of giving? (Smoking, for instance.) Or could not you give more simple dinners, drink less wine, or give one or two dinner parties less, during Lent?

Or could you not ask some District Visitor to tell you of one or two people to whom you could go, that you may tell them about our LORD, and shew Him, by trying to help others in soul and body, that you have not forgotten Him?

Be more with Christ.

—Be more with Christ.

OUR LORD does not want us merely to *give* Him something. He likes to have us more *with* Him—nearer to Him. Could you not rise earlier, and give Him one hour more in the morning? Or could you not take one night in the week from society, quietly to read the Gospels, with some Commentary, and learn more of CHRIST'S Life on earth?

The world would call all this "folly." So it did the offering of the alabaster box of ointment! • The difference between that woman and those who rebuked her was this: they did not love Him, and she loved Him "much."

And of course you will remember, that you cannot expect to grow in grace, without Holy Communion. Study, very carefully, the Communion Office in the Prayer Book. "Consider the great dignity of that Holy Mystery." Come more frequently. Prepare more carefully. Thank God afterwards, more scrupulously. If you love CHRIST, keep His Commandment: "This do, in remembrance of Me."



Call Sins by their right names.

—Call sins by their right names.

Do not soften down, or smooth over sins, or you will never learn their true character ; for instance, when you doubt His promises and His word (however lightly it may affect your own conscience), GOD says, "YOU MAKE HIM A LIAR." That is, you *give Him the lie*.

If, having known the power of Grace, you deliberately choose sin,—the Word of GOD says, you "CRUCIFY JESUS AFRESH."

When you range yourself on the side of the world, following its ways and maxims,—GOD calls you His "ENEMY."

When there lies hidden down in your heart some indulged anger, dislike, or hatred towards another,—JESUS calls you by no softer name than a "MURDERER."

When you spend so much on dress, useless show, conformity to passing fashion, and the extravagant habits of the present day,—the Bible says you are "ROBBING GOD."

Perhaps you indulge carelessly in light talking or manner with another's wife, or husband, and call it mere "flirtation"; GOD says, the unbridled *look* is ADULTERY already in the heart.

Call Sins by their right names.

Think of the innumerable falsehoods told every day in social intercourse, and in trade, by *word, look, manner, and action*,—the GOD of Truth calls these LIES; and however you may smooth and varnish it over, if you, in any way, try to give an impression contrary to the naked truth, you LIE.

What is your standard of right in the payment of bills? Do you take long credit, and keep people waiting for their money till they are driven to all kinds of sinful expedients, and are sometimes ruined both in soul and body? GOD says,—“I will be a swift witness against those that OPPRESS THE HIRELING IN HIS WAGES” (*i.e.*, those who labour for you, in whatever manner).

Perhaps you have a real religious experience, and have been converted to GOD at some former period of your life; and yet are now so mixed up with worldly people and worldly ways, that no one round you knows your true colours, or would put you down as a decided Christian; whatever you may call yourself, JESUS calls you TASTELESS SALT, fit only to be cast out as refuse.*

If you comfort yourself with the reflection that your past is not marked by any *great*

Be Brave and Honest.

sins, or flagrant falls, remember those colourless lives described as '*careless*' and '*at ease*' are denounced with 'WOE.' How does your life differ from them?

Do the terms in which a Christian life is defined in the New Testament in any way describe yours? "Fighting," "Wrestling," "Running," "Denying self," "Taking up the Cross daily."

Do you let the position, talent, or education of the sinner blind your eyes to the true character of sin? While you despise vanity, conceit, and all mean, vulgar sins, do you pay a sort of homage to excessive reserve, studied indifference, hauteur, and other refined forms of pride, which GOD HATES, and has said, "Him that hath an high look and a proud heart will not I suffer"?



—Be Brave and Honest.

RESOLVE to find and face the truth about your Soul's state whatever be the consequences. You may foresee that cherished things will have to be relinquished; disagreeable things to be done; restoration to be made (if

Be Brave and Honest.

possible) of what has been unjustly obtained ; open acknowledgment of any secret wrong done to another ; humbling apologies for rudeness or insult ; injurious statements to be retracted. It may involve your being lowered in the eyes of those whose good opinion you most prize. Your pride will have to be humbled, your self-satisfaction crushed. Nerve yourself, therefore, to do this work bravely. Do not shirk it, cost you what it will. A spiritual writer has said the first requisite for a soul that would attain perfection is Courage ; the second, Courage ; the third, Courage ; and courage is never more needed than here. Be brave, therefore ; be resolute ; look steadily at what is within, and follow on wherever the Cross leads.

Learn to distinguish between "natural gifts" in your character and the work of the HOLY SPIRIT in you : a gentle manner, an easy temper, generous impulses, are not always the work of "Grace," but the gifts of "nature" ; both are from God ; but the latter are like unwoven threads, mere "raw material," compared with the "vesture of gold, wrought about with divers colours," which is the garment of Grace.

Be Brave and Honest.

Recall all the teaching, opportunities, and advantages you have had, and what use you have made of them ; also the awful unreality of a great portion of your prayers, asking for things you care so little for, that five minutes after you have risen from your knees, you *could not tell a single object for which you had been praying.*

How much greater is the shame felt when a sin is *discovered*, than when it was hidden from the knowledge of others, although God saw it all the time !

Look at the unequal spirit of your life : one hour talking fervently about Religion with the religious, at another entering with equal zest into the most frivolous topics with the worldly.

When you fancy your hatred of sin to be very deep and sincere, ask yourself honestly which you fear most,—Sin ? or the *consequences* of sin ?

Take up your past life, and learn its true character ; do not merely glance at it, but recall its actions one by one ; look at them, estimate them truthfully, find out where you are in spiritual things, and whose dominion you are under, that of the World, or of JESUS CHRIST.

“Be Still !”

—“Be Still !”

• WHY is it that we, whose position compared with the position of the unbaptised, is as glorious as the position of a sovereign compared to that of a crossing-sweeper, do not realise the fact of our position? Why God placed one person in the position of a sovereign, and another in that of a crossing-sweeper, none can tell. We only know that God loves both of them. And why you and I have been chosen into this Divine Society, when millions of grand men, like Socrates, and the great heathen chiefs of Africa and India, have never been admitted, I cannot tell. The fact, however, is this. You and I, as the Bible says, have been elected, chosen of God. We are “a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a peculiar people”; called by God to a noble life on earth, and a glorious Kingdom hereafter. Why we have been thus chosen, I do not know. God will deal truly with the old heathen, and with the heathen of this generation also; but you and I are chosen, not to be “dumb driven cattle,” but heroes, princes, sons and daughters of the LORD ALMIGHTY! Why is it that we do not see the glory of our position?

“Be Still!”

Because we have not time to look at it! We have not time! God is ready to reveal it to us; He is lifting up the veil. But—we have not time to look beyond the veil!

And then, perhaps, God gives us an illness; and for awhile we leave the business, we leave the pleasure. Or God takes the money away, and we have nothing to spend. Or God calls us to watch by a sick bed. The wife dies, the child dies, the friend dies,—going to the joy of Paradise. For a week or two we are quiet; and the veil is raised, and we look beyond. But it falls again; we have not time! On Sunday, there is the luncheon, and the conversation, and the letters, and what is called the “harmless gossip” if not worse. On the week-day, the excuse is, “I cannot get up in the morning for prayer; I am tired. I cannot think at night; I am tired,” with the work, or with the pleasure. The man of business says, “I cannot do anything else but work, work, work!” On goes the great machine, in this labour-field of England; and it must go on; for “in the sweat of thy brow thou shalt eat bread.”

But God says, “Be still.” God says, “One day in seven, at any rate, rest.” Out of forty

Spiritual Blindness.

letters which may arrive on a Sunday, perhaps only two or three need be read on the Sunday. "Be still!"



—Spiritual Blindness.

THE Bible history tells us that when the SON of GOD Himself was upon earth, those who corresponded in earthly position, in intellectual ability, in spiritual knowledge, to the ordinary people of our day, were so blind, that they saw in JESUS CHRIST no beauty that they should desire Him; that they despised Him, rejected Him, treated Him as an impostor, and thought that they did GOD service by nailing Him to the Cross and putting Him to death.

Is there no danger lest we may be at least as blind as those amongst whom CHRIST went all unnoticed, despised and rejected? Is it not possible that there may be something in the Bible, something in the Sacraments, something in every godly man and woman among us, that we have never yet seen, because we are blind?

Imagine what it will be, when we shall see

Spiritual Blindness.

CHRIST in His glory, and all the Angels and Archangels with Him, and all the Saints ;— and we review our life, and find that everywhere, in the house, in the street, in the church, was a GOD surrounding us with blessings ; that JESUS was standing in our midst, loving us, and we *never saw Him*.

What, then, is the cause of this blindness ?

The Bible tells us plainly, it is because the devil, the god of this world, has blinded the eyes of those who believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of CHRIST, who is the Image of GOD the FATHER, should shine on them. A *person* blinds their eyes. And that person uses the things of this world, to hide the glories of the invisible world by which we are surrounded. This is the simple explanation which is given to us, in His tender love, by GOD Himself.

There is, first, the direct attack of the devil, in vanity and pride.

There is, secondly, the burning fever of impurity.

There is, thirdly, the slow withering consumption of the love of this present world ; minding earthly things. Look on the ground, and you see mud. Look up, and you see

Blinded by the God of this World.

the stars, and the beautiful clouds, and the heavenly sunset. You do not see both at once.



—Blinded by the God of this World.

THE god of this world is blinding our minds, so far as we allow the old nature,—even in its most beautiful and refined and cultured forms, —to be rising up ; instead of keeping down the lower, •the natural life, by the supernatural power of the HOLY SPIRIT ; allowing ourselves to be absorbed in the things of this life,—however innocent and right in themselves,—the things that GOD has given to us for our pleasure, the ordinary business that we have to do, and must do.

The god of this world is blinding our minds, so far as, like the Jews, we are receiving honour from man ;—making our speeches, writing our letters, taking our part in public life, managing our household, studying, or doing whatever we are doing for the sake of the praise that comes from man ; so far as we are allowing the devil to develop in us spiritual pride, or pride of birth,

Blinded by the God of this World.

or pride of intellect, or pride of anything that GOD may have given us as a means of influencing others.

So far as we are doing this, we are doing what JESUS CHRIST said ruined the Jews. They had lived, age after age, according to the time-honoured principles which had been handed down from father to son ;—the very principles that rule now in this England of ours ;—and the LORD GOD told the Jews that they had been *blinded* by the god of this world. The innocent things of life, the natural love of honour, and the natural love of the world, these are the things against which, at our Baptism, we were pledged to fight ; the pride of life, the pomps and the vanities of the world ;—these things shut our eyes ; year by year. These things blinded the Jews ; and JESUS CHRIST tells us that they will blind us likewise. And so, we may be living with the most magnificent opportunities that were ever put within the reach of man,—members of CHRIST, children of GOD, heirs of the Kingdom of Heaven,—with GOD all day long in our midst, and yet,—seeing nothing.



Minding Earthly Things.

—Minding Earthly Things.

COME with me, far away, in thought, to that great American continent. Let us stand in mid-winter, near one of those gigantic lakes, all covered with its icy shroud. Watch, far up in that clear sky, the proud sovereign of the air, that great eagle, peering up in its grandeur into the very face of the sun itself, with its unapproachable glory. See it there, claiming kindred with the clouds, companioning as it were with God's eternal firmament. Watch its magnificence, as it poises its wings in that glorious atmosphere of purity and light and beauty. Watch it as the sunlight falls upon its plumes, in all its majestic beauty.

There, beneath, on that frozen lake, lies a dark shadow. Watch! It is but a little shadow, on that cold ice-bound lake. The great sovereign of the air fastens its eye on it. It *minds* that *earthly thing*. It ceases to look upwards. It ceases to revel in the bright sunshine. It ceases to look through the open door into the great firmament of heaven. Its eye has fastened on that little shadow—something that it can grasp, some-

Christ's Yoke.

thing that it can eat, something that will satisfy its animal nature. With one great swoop it descends. It fastens on its prey.

Watch that bird. It has got what it wanted. But—*the talons are frozen*,—frozen ; bound down to that ice ; and there for ever it remains ; bones, talons, flesh, withering ; dying by inches ; a monument, to angels and to men, of the power of the lower nature to destroy the higher ; of the power of the god of this world to blind the eyes of men, lest they should see the beauty and the magnificence and the abounding love of Thee, my God and my King, Who art coming to judge the quick and the dead !



—Christ's Yoke.

LISTEN to the tender words of the LORD JESUS CHRIST Himself : "Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart."—"My yoke !" He pictures Himself—so humbly !—as one of a yoke of oxen, going on their monotonous round. On one side, He Himself stands, like the patient ox, in meek submission to the FATHER'S Will.

Christ's Yoke.

We see Him, full of enthusiasm, with the Doctors in the Temple, yet quietly leaving them, and going down to Nazareth, to be subject to Joseph and His Mother. We go on ; we see Him left by His FATHER, without bread to eat, dependent on the kindness of a wicked woman for even a drop of water ! (St. Matt. iv. ; St. John iv.) We watch Him in the Agony of Gethsemane and the Darkness of Calvary ; spit upon, scourged, crucified, left without sympathy—without comfort ! We hear Him cry to His FATHER, "Why hast Thou forsaken Me ?" And yet, saying, with the submission of perfect trust, "FATHER, into Thy Hands I commend My Spirit."

Then, He points to *the vacant place by His Side*, in that yoke, and says, "Come unto Me ; take My yoke ; learn of Me."

"My yoke !" I know how hard it is ! The same yoke that I have taken on Myself ! I submit to GOD ; I submit to man ; I take the *lowest* place ; I have found My Rest in doing My FATHER'S Will, from Bethlehem to Calvary ; and you will find your Rest—there is no other way—in taking your place by My side.

And then, if we *do* thus take His yoke upon us, there comes such a sense of the tender

Christ's Yoke.

Love of CHRIST, as He watches us under that yoke, suffering as He suffered,—it matters not whether it be in what are called the “trifles,” or the greater sorrows, of life,—such a sense of His sympathy! “He Himself hath suffered.” *He learned obedience by the things which He suffered.* There was one lesson that the Incarnate God had to learn! “Though He were a SON, yet learned He obedience, by the things which He suffered.” He humbled Himself under the mighty Hand of God.

When we have learned in any degree this humble obedience, then we begin to realise what is meant by those words of unspeakable comfort: “We have not a High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the Throne of Grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in the time of need.” “For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted.”



Self-Emptying.

—Self-Emptying.

WE must be emptied of self, and of all, as far as we know it, which is contrary to the Mind of GOD. Of all this we know very little; but so far as we do know it we must strive to be emptied of it. And GOD will help us to know it more and more, and will strengthen us in our endeavours to cast it out. And we must remind ourselves in this, that we have to do with One Who is a living and true GOD. Therefore we will not dally with evil. We will not stand by until we see what is to be done with CHRIST and His Church before we declare ourselves. We will not warm ourselves by the fire of worldly honour, or worldly pleasure, when CHRIST is standing in the midst of foes, exposed to shame and insult. We will stand by CHRIST.

But it is not a mere emptying of ourselves that is required. We empty ourselves that we may be filled. Ours is no mere negative religion. If the knowledge of the Godhead of CHRIST has any power over us, if we are enabled to see Him as the very God-man, then we must know that there is not a greater joy to Him than to give us out of His

Temptation.

fulness. As a Teacher, He is ready to enlighten us, as a Friend to cheer us, as a Redeemer to save us. To Him, above all, it is more blessed to give than to receive. Let us avail ourselves of this. We do not consider enough that He has ascended up on high and received gifts for men, which He is ever ready to dispense to those who come to Him. How often have we asked without believing that we should receive? * * The moment that we are fit to receive—not, that is to say, good enough, but humble enough—we shall receive. Let us thank God that this is certain.



—Temptation.

WHY are we tempted? Why has God allowed it? Why are so many dark hours permitted, for those who are really living to CHRIST? Why is it that every one that is worthy the name of a Christian has to recall times when life was a weariness and a burden—when, from various causes, temptation seemed almost to overpower him? Why is all this allowed?

Temptation.

We know not. "The secret things belong unto the LORD our GOD."

It is enough for us to know that we are in a world so constituted, that it is impossible for us to escape from temptation.

Whatever the cause, in some form or other, temptation must come. It came in Paradise ; where the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, entered in, through that old Serpent that is called Satan.

It came to the *Second* Adam. He was "led up of the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil." The HOLY GHOST, Who had descended upon Him in the form of a Dove, when the Voice proclaimed Him to be the "Beloved Son," led Him up afterwards into that lonely desert, to be tempted by Satan.

Therefore, from Temptation we can never escape. The question for us is this : "*How am I to deal with temptation ?*"

I. First of all, if we wish to fight successfully against temptation, *we must be clear about the Atonement.*

However much we may be trying to do good works, and things acceptable to GOD ; however earnest we may be ; however sure

Temptation.

those who love us may be, that one day GOD will reveal to us this blessed truth ; yet, so far as power in resisting temptation is concerned, we are like straws blown about by the wind, until we have done the *first* work of all, that is, believed on the LORD JESUS CHRIST, for the remission of our sins.

GOD ALMIGHTY has told us that He has dealt with our sins in a right royal manner ; that He has laid them *all*—all the guilt of the world—upon the LAMB OF GOD, Who died on Calvary. And He commands us—or rather, entreats us, as a Father, for our own happiness—before we “go forward” one step, to “stand still, and see the salvation” that our GOD has wrought for us.

He tells us, first, to trust our LORD, and to believe, on His Word, without *feeling*, that His Blood washes our sins away.

And He tells us, next, to look up to Him, as the Israelites looked up to the Brazen Serpent : and to think of Him, to thank Him, to read about Him, and to speak to Him, until the darkness passes away, and we see clearly this glorious foundation-truth, that “while we were yet sinners, CHRIST died for us” ; that the Blood of Him who

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cried "It is finished," cleanseth us from *all* sin.

Now if we are not taking the trouble to obtain this rest and peace in believing; if we are so satisfied with our own poor service, and so proud, that we *will fight against* Divine Love; then—when temptation arises—we shall fall.

II. But now, supposing that we *have* entered into this "rest," by believing, and see clearly that we are "accepted in the Beloved," what is the next step, in dealing with temptation?

Repeat the process that you passed through, when trying to realise the forgiveness of sin. Go over again, with regard to the *power* of sin what you did when you tried to get rid of the *guilt* of sin.

We open our Bible, and find that GOD tells us that He is able to deliver us from evil. We find that it is written: "Sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the Law, but under Grace": you are no longer under the dispensation of that Old Covenant, but under the grace of His Incarnation. And so we find our Church teaching us, in the prayer that she puts into our lips

Temptation.

every morning, that He is able to keep us from sin. "Vouchsafe, O LORD, to keep us this day without sin"; and again: "Grant that this day we fall into no sin, neither run into any kind of danger."

Then, the next step is to say to Him: "I *wish* to believe; I cannot do it; I ask Thee to help me to believe." Do not rest until—all in the dark, it may be—you have trusted your poor, tempted, struggling soul to Him. Though Satan has caused you to have many and many a fall in past years, say to your LORD: "I know that Thou hast the power to keep me from sin; *I will believe*, and trust my soul to Thee; help Thou mine unbelief."

Then, if you are afraid of any special temptation, repeat this Act of Faith, morning by morning *for that day*: "O LORD, Thou knowest how utterly I have failed in But I have trusted my soul to Thee. Vouchsafe, O LORD, to keep me this day without that sin."

And then, afterwards, when the temptation comes, instead of merely asking your LORD to help you, thank Him that you have a Covenant with Him; that He has promised to take care of that soul which you have thus

Temptation is not Sin.

entrusted to Him ; that He is able to keep that which you have committed to Him. When the temptation comes, say such words as these : " LORD, help me ! I thank Thee that Thou hast *promised* to help me ; undertake for me ! " Remind yourself, quietly, that you have committed your soul to Him, and that He has taken charge of it.



—Temptation is not Sin.

Do not confuse temptation with sin. That is one of Satan's great objects. He fills our minds with wandering thoughts and unholy desires, and then he turns round upon us, and says : " You have sinned ; you are guilty ; that wandering thought, that defiled imagination, that bitter and uncharitable feeling, that unholy word, shows that you have no part or lot in this matter."

Temptation is not sin. Our Blessed LORD passed through every temptation, yet He never sinned. In all points He was tempted, like as we are ; and yet, " without sin."

We may be tempted for a whole month—without a moment's comfort, through those

Temptation and the Old Nature.

entire weeks, and yet we may never once have yielded to the temptation. Sin only begins, when our will yields itself up to the desires of our lower nature, or to the temptings of the great adversary. Stand fast in your fortress ! Let the arrows of the enemy fall as they will ! You cannot help it, if the enemy is near ; but you are safe, unless you go out of your fortress, and give yourself up to the enemy.



—Temptation and the Old Nature.

REALISE your true position with regard to the old nature. It is a great help to look quietly on these spiritual diseases—this unholy temper, this discontent and murmuring, or whatever it may be—as *apart from yourself*. It is the “old man,” as St. Paul calls it ; the old nature, gradually dying out, that the new man may be raised up in you. Learn to say : “What a blessing that I am baptized into CHRIST ! that I have put on CHRIST ; that the HOLY GHOST is developing in me the higher nature ! What a blessing, that the old nature is like a grain of corn dying out ; and that my

Temptation and the Higher Nature.

real self, this higher nature, is growing up like the blade out of the dark soil ; “ first the blade, then the ear, after that, the full corn in the ear.”

And it is a great help, at times, to look at yourself almost *satirically* ; to say : “ What would have become of me, if GOD had left me to myself ! Look at these bad feelings, these grudging thoughts, this impatience, this want of love, these miserable prayers, these wretched Communion ! If I had been left to myself, what a contemptible creature I should have been, by this time ! In me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth *no* good thing.” There is a deliverance in such thoughts and words as these, which can be realised only by those who have used them.



—Temptation and the Higher Nature.

“ Put on the new man, which after GOD is created in righteousness and true holiness.” Try to lay hold of this idea ; that although the tabernacle of your earthly nature is gradually decaying, there is forming in you a glorious nature ; even as, by the Incarnation, the

Temptation and the Higher Nature.

Godhead dwelt in the frail temple of Humanity. Say to yourself : There is in me this higher nature ; and my part is this :—to go on *feeding the higher nature*, in every possible way. I must take care to spare no effort. I must not neglect my devotions. I must kneel down, even if I feel I cannot pray. I must read my Bible, even if I have no inclination for its holy teachings. I must prepare for that Communion, and thank God afterwards for the blessing that I *know* I shall have received, though I may not *enjoy* it at the time—nay, may feel as if I were a hypocrite. I must go on feeding the higher nature, by drawing near to His Holy Table, however long God may allow me to remain under the dark cloud of temptation.

Some of you may have gone out in the morning into a great forest, and seen a gigantic tree laid low, and you have said, “Why is this? There was no great storm last night.” But on examining the tree, you find it was inwardly decayed, and dead ; and therefore the little breeze of eventide was enough to lay it low,—that strong oak ! Even so, if there be not, by the grace of God, this continual *feeding* of the higher nature, it must decay.

Temptation and the Higher Nature.

This will account for the fall of many, who were once, it may be, more holy than any of us. They neglected feeding the higher nature ; and they were deluded by the devil, because all seemed peace, and no storm was raging around them ; and then came that sudden fall.

And on the other hand, I have sometimes watched a Christian man passing through a whole Lent, without any comfort in his religion ; no conscious communion with God, no joy in the HOLY GHOST, none of those happy seasons, which we would not exchange for anything in this world. And yet, he has gone on steadily with his prayers and Bible reading, and works of kindness to others :—for you must be especially careful, in the season of darkness, to go and do something to help others ; to say a kind word to someone, even if feeling full of bitterness in your heart.—He had been determined to go on doing the things that he would have done, if he had felt CHRIST near to him. And then, when God had allowed him to be tried sufficiently for the deepening of his religious life, I have watched him come out of the trial with such a *real* and thankful spirit, and such

Consider Christ.

power of the HOLY GHOST, that I can only describe it by the account given in one of the Gospels of our Blessed LORD, "when the devil had ended all the temptation"; that He went forth "in the power of the Spirit," and did such wondrous works, that all the people were astonished.



—Consider Christ.

"CONSIDER Him Who endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be weary, and faint in your minds. Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin." (Hebrews xii. 3, 4.)

When you are dark, and doubtful, and miserable, "Consider Him"; and then, each new trial and temptation shall bring out some new aspect of His Character, some new revelation of His Love.

1. "Consider Him," so as to *imitate* Him. Observe how He dealt with the devil. When the devil came to Him, He did not argue with him; He did not even pray, so far as we are told; but simply took a *text*,

Consider Christ.

again and again. "It is written." "It is written." "It is written."

"Let us imitate our LORD, in His way of dealing with principalities and powers of evil; and so shall we conquer more frequently than we have done in the past.

Let us say to Satan: "The more you try and tempt me, the more I will say such texts as these: 'The Son of GOD loved me, and gave Himself for me:' 'He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.'"

2. "Consider Him," so as to *intercede for others, in His Name*. You will not always have strength to do this; for there are times when the soul feels as if it could not stir itself up even to say, "O GOD, remember that soul; I ask it in the Name of JESUS." But if, when you *are* able to do it, you simply mention to GOD, *in the Name of our Lord*, some great need of the Church, or some soul specially tried, or some one poor wanderer, you will be surprised, afterwards, to find how abundant is the harvest of those intercessions sown in the dark hours of temptation.

3. "Consider Him," so as to realise His Sympathy; think how He suffered all that we suffer.

Consider Christ.

If we are unfairly treated, and unjustly judged, let us "consider Him" Who was "despised and rejected of men." He is the same Saviour Who was tempted on earth; and therefore, to use the beautiful words of the Apostle, He can be "*touched with the feeling of our infirmities.*" He remembers what it was to be unjustly accused; to feel forsaken; to be tempted, even as ~~we~~ we are tempted; and therefore, He can feel for us, whom He is not ashamed to call His "brethren."

4. And so, if we "consider Him," we shall learn to *tell Him everything which concerns us.* We only waste time, in talking to *ourselves* about ourselves.

Begin at once to tell Him all. Say to Him: "O Lord, I have been unkindly treated; I think this is more than I ought to bear"; and so forth. Whatever it be, go and speak to Him; tell Him all about it. "Pour out thy heart like water before the face of the Lord."

When you have fallen, do not say to *yourself*, "I shall never succeed," but *tell Him* your fear; say to Him: "O LORD, I am afraid I shall never succeed." And even

Jesus our Friend.

before you have finished speaking to Him, He will, very often, by the power of the Blessed SPIRIT, put some text into your mind to cheer and strengthen you.



—Jesus our Friend.

TRY to cultivate a holy *friendship* with JESUS CHRIST! I say it with all reverence; but it is His own blessed Word, in St. John xv. 15: "I have called you *friends*." Try to cultivate this holy friendship; so that when temptation comes, you may not have to run to Him as a stranger. You know what it is, in sorrow, when you already know your Clergyman, so that it is not a strange face, coming into that chamber of sorrow. And our LORD says: "I call you not servants; I have called you *friends*." When He was on earth, "JESUS loved Martha, and Mary, and Lazarus;" and He loved St. John. And He loves each one of us: the poorest, the weakest, and most sinful, He loves, in one sense, most of all, because they need His Love most.

O what depths of Love there are in that Heart of JESUS CHRIST of Nazareth! We

Self-Abnegation.

never know what it is, till the times of temptation come, and we *prove* the real, deep affection of Him, Who is the Brother "born for adversity."

Cultivate, then, this sort of confidential relation with JESUS CHRIST. Form the habit of speaking to Him confidentially ; of going to Him at all times ; of telling Him everything that you think and feel. If you think that you have done a little better to-day than yesterday, *tell Him*, and thank Him for His help, and ask Him to save you from all spiritual pride. Tell your thoughts to Him ; speak to Him of your blessings, your troubles, your joys. "Pour out your hearts before Him."



—Self-Abegnation.

WHATEVER our position in life may be, we like to use the influence it gains for us, and are pleased by any respect that is paid to us ; and that is simply a natural instinct. Now GOD ALMIGHTY may say, Take that power, that respect, those riches, and use them as an offering to God ; stretch your influence to

Self-Abnegation.

the utmost, that so, if possible, you may drag the whole world after you ; but with what object ? In order that it may sing your praises ? No ; but in order that it may lie in humblest adoration at the feet of the Crucified, saying, " Holy, Holy, Holy, Thou only art Holy, Thou only art the LORD." Again, most people like to have their own way, and to feel that others are compelled to obey them : and there are times when we must use such power to the utmost for GOD. But the first outcome of it is of the flesh, not of the Spirit, and the Apostle says we must not fight with carnal weapons, but with spiritual. If we do not, therefore, ask GOD whether He wishes us to use this power, at any particular time, in His service—if we employ it simply because it is pleasing to our Self, and do not wait for GOD's answer—then we are only taking up the old nature, we are undoing the work of Calvary by giving occasion to the flesh to triumph, by allowing it food on which to thrive, and by letting it enter into the inmost shrine of our hearts. It is the same with regard to food, or to any craving of the lower nature. It may be necessary that we eat much, or eat little ;

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but not for a single moment are we to listen to the dictates of our lower nature as to what we *like* in the matter.

But how are we to know what is the Master's Will with regard to these desires of Self?

We must, first of all, by prayerful study of God's Holy Word, find out the principles by which we are to be guided. If it is difficult to see how these principles are to be applied in any special case, we should consult our Clergyman; and then have courage to run the risk of sometimes making a mistake. Our Lord makes allowance for all mistakes, if only He sees that we are in earnest and honestly trying to serve Him. Next, we must be willing to wait, we must be calm and watchful, giving time to our Lord to answer; it may be a year, or, if God so wills, it may be a lifetime, before such response is given us. But, while we are thus waiting, we must be ready to listen for the Voice of God, even if it should please Him to give us the answer through a distasteful channel, or by the bitter words of an enemy.



The Battle of Endurance.

—The Battle of Endurance.

IN body, soul, and spirit we are liable to suffering. We are never sure, at any moment, that some accident may not happen to our *body*, which shall rob us of all power of enjoyment in this life. Our *mind* may suffer at any moment, even if we are spared the utter loss of our reason, a trial which comes to many far better and far holier than ourselves. The *heart* may be wounded quite unexpectedly in its tenderest part; wounded by those whom it loves; wounded with a deep wound which will never be healed in this life.

More than this. The mystery of iniquity works; not only the mystery of suffering. There come periods when power seems to be given to the devil to "overcome the saints" (Rev. xiii. 7). The Christian man has been indulging pride, we will suppose; or has been allowing some want of love to grow all unobserved in his heart. He has had unkind feelings, and he has not burnt them out with the fire of God's Spirit. And so,—in love to his soul, that it may be saved

The Battle of Endurance.

in the Day of the LORD,—GOD allows him to fall, as He allowed St. Peter to fall ; not to be utterly lost, but to fall by some awful degradation, that shall startle him out of that pride, or that want of charity, and bring him humbly to the feet of his Lord,

How, then, are we to endure, unless we know that there is a Living Being “of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness,” Who has revealed Himself to us as the FATHER, the Husband, the Friend, the Brother ? How are we to endure, unless we know that there is such a Being, and have given ourselves over absolutely into His hands ?

Then, when the fresh trial comes,—it may be suddenly,—we shall only require a few days to re-adjust ourselves, as it were ; to go back to the Bible and receive the old strength and comfort ; and then we shall be able to say, calmly and quietly : “This is a surprise ; I never thought the trial would come in this form. But GOD is faithful. I know Whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that He will keep that which I have committed to Him unto that day.”



Strength for the Battle.

—Strength for the Battle.

THE Lord is going forth on a great battle, in this world of ours. He is setting free the souls that Satan has bound, these many years. He would touch blind eyes by *your* hands. He would speak to deaf ears by *your* voice. You and I have been called, by our very Baptism, into His glorious conquering Army. We have a Leader, so gentle, that we can go as it were, to His tent at night, and tell Him that we are afraid of to-morrow's warfare,—that the hard battle has weakened our nerves,—that the devil is strong, and we are weak. And he will take us,—like a woman in His tenderness,—with our armour still stained by the battlefield, and will gently let us lean—as St. John did at that last supper—on His breast; and He will whisper into our hearts words of strength; so that, calmly and solemnly, yet with intense love, we shall stand unmoved in this great London, with all its fascinations, saying, “I live, yet not I, but CHRIST liveth in me. I am not mine own; the Love of CHRIST has constrained me; because I thus judge, that if One died for all, then were all dead; and that He died for all

The Story of the Cross.

that they should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him Who loved them and gave Himself for them."

Let us grasp the fact that JESUS CHRIST is the Same Who led on those Apostles to victory,—Who made the oracles of Greece to be silent, and the proud temples of Rome to crumble into dust. Let us believe that He is the Same; that He is still with us in this nineteenth century; and let us rise up, and He will lead us,—poor, weak, helpless beings as we are, out of the darkness of unpardoned sin, into the light and peace of believing;—out from the selfish cowardice of simply living for self,—whether it be a spiritual or an earthly self,—to repeat the triumphs, by which, in olden days, the world was laid low beneath the banner of the Crucified.



—The Story of the Cross.

FOUR times during Holy Week, the Church repeats in our ears the Story of the Cross. From each Evangelist in turn, we hear it. We follow JESUS, on that last night, as He

The Story of the Cross.

leaves the upper room, with His eleven disciples :—we follow Him—from the golden gate of Jerusalem—down the valley of Kedron—across that little stream—into the garden of Gethsemane. We are led on, with St. Peter, St. James, and St. John, to watch with Him, as, in that strange mysterious silence which some of you have felt in Holy Week, we almost *hear* those “great drops of Blood falling down to the ground.” Onward we go, with Him : we see that sacred Back given to the smiters—the purple robe—the cruel nails—the Cross—the darkness : we hear the awful cry : “My God, My God, why has THOU forsaken me ?”

Then, the HOLY SPIRIT takes that knowledge of sin which we have gained in the early days of Lent, and He *applies* the awful history to each heart and conscience ; He helps us to look at our sin in the light of CALVARY.

“What must sin be”—He whispers in these quiet hours—“what must there be in sin, if its poison could only be healed by that Blood-shedding ? And *thou* hast sinned ! Thou hast found out, this Lent, it may be, hundreds of sins : and each of these sins was

The Story of the Cross.

so dreadful, in GOD's sight, that HIS DEAR SON must die, before that sin could be taken away!

But the Blessed SPIRIT does not leave us here. After that vision of SIN, He takes us aside, on Good Friday, and tells us, in softer accents, of the LOVE of JESUS.

"Was ever Love like His?"—the HOLY SPIRIT pleads. "Was ever Sin like thine? Behold the Love of CHRIST, which passeth knowledge! By that Love, measure thy exceeding sinfulness. All thy life, thou hast been sinning against this Love! All thy life, thou hast been grieving such a SAVIOUR as this! He has seen thee a coward—afraid of suffering for Him; giving up prayer, &c., rather than be laughed at, or lose a little of this world's money, or pleasures! 'Not this Man, but Barabbas,' has been the cry of thy heart. The world for me!—its pleasures—its popularity—its fleeting joys! Year after year, this JESUS of Nazareth has passed by. Year after year, He has knocked at the door of thy heart; but He has found no entrance. There has been a welcome for earthly friends, but no welcome for HIM. Again and again, He has been

The Story of the Cross.

wounded—pierced—crucified ; by *thee* !”

Thus the, HOLY SPIRIT whispers, in the quiet hours of HOLY WEEK, till SIN appears to us what it really is “ exceeding sinful.”

Yet, instead of driving us away from Him in fear, the HOLY SPIRIT draws us nearer to the LORD JESUS. For thus He speaks to our troubled spirit : “ If He had not loved you, He would not have been grieved by your sin. If He cared enough about you to be grieved when He saw you sinning, careless and impenitent, surely you can trust Him to care for you now—*now*, when He sees you lying thus at His feet, wishing to repent and to walk in newness of life !”

It is thus that GOD the HOLY GHOST—Who is a LIVING PERSON, remember, —takes the words of the old GOSPEL, and applies them ; until, by the mighty power of that Divine SPIRIT, the heart is broken—it knows not how. It has looked on HIM Whom it has pierced ; and it mourns.



Redemption through the Blood of Christ.

—Redemption through the Blood of Christ.

It is no matter how GOD sets us free ; whether the idea is that of Christ "bound" like Simeon ; or of GOD breaking the Devil's power, as Pharaoh's was broken ; or of Christ's precious Blood being like the ransom paid, to set the captive free. It is but trifling to waste our life in examining how this great deliverance was accomplished for us.

The one thing upon which GOD fixes our eyes is this : "We have redemption through His Blood." We can picture to ourselves the Blood falling from that sacred Body. We know that that Blood, being the Blood of the Son of GOD,—of One Who was Very GOD as well as Very Man,—had a super-human power : a power that no blood of *man*, no offering of *man*, could ever have had ; the whole magnificent strength, the whole tremendous power of the Eternal Incomprehensible GOD, brought down, as it were, into that Blood ; the Blood that fell from the pierced side of the Incarnate Lord, dying on Calvary.

Redemption by Sacrifice.

And GOD's message is this. That Blood has been shed. Nothing can add to it. Nothing can take from it. The true Simeon has been bound, and all who believe on Him are free. The true deliverance has been wrought, and the power of the Devil has been broken. The ransom, even to the last farthing, has been counted out. And the result is—that *you are free*; you, who have tried, and failed; you who have learned your guilt, past, present, future,—but have believed in JESUS CHRIST. To GOD there is no such thing as past and future. GOD is, not only was and will be, “the Same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.”



—Redemption by Sacrifice.

“GOD so loved the world, that He gave His Only Begotten SON.” “Therefore doth the FATHER love Me, because I lay down My life I lay it down Myself.” “Lo, I come, to do Thy Will, O GOD.” The FATHER and the SON knew that by Sacrifice mankind could be saved. The cost was counted. The Atonement was effected, by the FATHER

Redemption by Sacrifice.

and the SON, in the Oneness of the Everlasting Godhead.

Is there anything in this which is opposed to an enlightened reason? If you loved some poor, degraded heathen race, and desired to send your son, in the power of the HOLY GHOST, to be their deliverer; and if, by the same Blessed Spirit, that boy's whole being should be fired with the noblest ambition by which the heart of man can be possessed, so that he should desire to give himself up for the regeneration of humanity, who would have the right to charge you, his father, with any cruelty, even though his life were to be sacrificed in the death-jungles of Africa?

Sacrificed! The word suggests another thought. The teaching of Holy Scripture is, indeed, consonant alike with the intuitions and with the experience of mankind. What is the truth, which is found in every age and every land, shadowed forth amid the barbarities of heathen altars, and unfolded in a purer form in the countless offerings of the Jewish Temple? Is it not this: that the mysterious Kingdom of Death, by which we are everywhere surrounded, can only be

Redemption by Sacrifice.

destroyed by the *sacrifice*—partial or complete—of its conqueror.

Is not the Desert redeemed from the sway of physical death, by the life-blood of your Livingstones? Is it not at the cost of broken nights, and the premature decay of his own vital energy, that the earthly physician snatches back from death the bodies of his fellow-men? Is it not true, that if Heathendom is to be uplifted into the life of civilization—not to speak of Christianity,—men like Bishop Patteson and Captain Goodenough must be given up to die? Nay, is the death-current of sin ever forced back from any human soul, unless he by whom that soul is shepherded has learnt something at least of the meaning of sacrifice? "I protest by your rejoicing which I have in CHRIST JESUS our LORD," said the great Apostle of the Gentiles, "I die daily."

In strict accordance, then, with this great principle of nature and of grace, the world was redeemed. GOD PUT AWAY SIN BY THE SACRIFICE OF HIMSELF!



Our Lord's Silence under Provocation.

—Our Lord's Silence under Provocation.

“He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth.” “JESUS yet answered nothing ; so that Pilate marvelled ” “When He suffered, He threatened not ; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously.” It pleased the FATHER that the glorious Godhead of His SON should be hidden ; that Divine power which shall be manifested when He comes back in His glory.

Before the Presence of that Divine glory, the whole invisible world to-day is prostrating itself ; the Angels fall down before the eternal Throne and worship Him ; it is that glorious Presence, which brings forth from the spirits and souls of the righteous in Paradise the great anthem of praise, “Worthy is the LAMB that was slain, to receive power and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing ! Blessing, and honour, and glory and power, be unto the LAMB, for ever and ever.” And yet this CHRIST, for eighteen hundred years, hides Himself. This CHRIST allows Himself to be

The Power of Suffering.

patronised, allows His Divinity to be questioned, allows His claims to be subordinated to our ease, to our cowardice, to our fear of being thought hypocrites, of making mistakes, of being singular, of standing alone. The CHRIST subordinates all the natural impulses of His perfect Humanity to the quiet, calm submission of His Will to this great principle of the Divine economy, that the eternal, the glorious, the Divine, should be so hidden in the common-place and the ordinary, that only those who are "pure in heart"—only the purified, humble souls, and the "little children" not yet defiled—can see the glory of Him, Who is standing in our midst, though we know Him not.



—The Power of Suffering.

IF we try to think what part of our LORD's Life it is that has influenced us, and influenced the future of His Church the most, we shall find that it is not so much what He did, as what He suffered.

From the pierced side came the Blood and Water, for the healing of Humanity.

The Power of Suffering.

When He was well and strong, in the human sense, He healed the sick and worked miracles ; but *the power* of His Life was in His suffering and dying.

One new thought which Christianity has brought into the world is this : the strange power that there is in Suffering.

It almost seems as if the members of CHRIST'S Body are to do yet more through their suffering, than through all their energizing ; as if we would say it reverently—through the wounds of the members, as well as of the Head, Life is to flow out !

How wonderful it is, as years roll on, to watch the results of the prayer offered in faith, without feeling, by some one too weak in body and in soul to do more than say : "O GOD, remember the Covenant which Thou hast made, through JESUS CHRIST my LORD ! I pray in the Name of Thy SON JESUS CHRIST."

O the force of those hours when we are too exhausted to work, too dark and lifeless to realise anything ! O the power of such times, not only on our own life, and on the education of the holy Angels, but in fulfilling His Work ! The idea seems too great for us to grasp.

The Power of Suffering.

What hinders us in grasping it is this thought : "Yes, but JESUS CHRIST was without *sin*, and I am full of sin. How can I know that I am linked with CHRIST, in this suffering ? Perhaps I am not bearing my cross—*i.e.*, the daily cross in little things—in a right way ?" Satan says : "If you were pure and holy, then you might perhaps feel that you were helping in the great work ; but how can you feel this, when you are so sinful, sinking beneath your cross ?"

There is deep teaching for us in that story recorded by St. John, where we read of CHRIST washing His disciples' feet. They could not bear to see CHRIST *humbled* : it perplexed them. But he answered : "What I do, thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." And now, we see that the most glorious part of His work on earth was His humiliation !

And in like manner, there is a something in the humiliations which we receive, from the assaults of Satan, from the hard and unloving world, and from our lower self rising up again and again, and even conquering us—there is a something in all this, which, humbly borne, in darkness and in weariness, simply clinging

Dying with Christ.

to our LORD, may be working out untold blessings for mankind.



—Dying with Christ.

You and I have been “baptized into His Death.” We are to die with Christ. It is our appointed path ; there is no other. “If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him.”

Come and stand with me by the Cross : let us look upon Him in His human agony. As we look, the silent lips seem to open, and say once more : “Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone.” There must be the dying ; the pain, the darkness. Sooner or later, we must die with CHRIST. In the spiritual life, it must ever be so ; again and again, through darkness to light.

1. When we were first awakened, when GOD first taught us the reality of our sins, and of the wages of sin, there seemed to us but the faintest hope of our sin being blotted out ; —you remember the dark and dreary feeling of that time : prayer seeming an impossibility ; no vent for our thoughts in words ; sins of

Dying with Christ.

the past rising up against us ; no comfort, no hope, no life in us !

• That was the *beginning* of your dying with CHRIST. You then began to realise the alphabet of your Baptism into His Death. There was a dying to your old trust in self, your old self-righteousness. The nails of the Cross went through your heart.

2. And then there was another dying—for the Death of CHRIST is repeated again and again in the members of His mystical Body—before you were able to come out decidedly on His side, even though you knew that your sin was forgiven. There was a dying, before you were brave enough to be on the LORD's side openly, giving up your hands to the nails, willing to be " crucified with CHRIST."

3. Aye, and long after this, there comes yet another dying. Whenever the LORD is going to pour fresh grace into your soul—there is another dying to the old nature. You seem to have lost all that you had gained in former years. There is another emptying—another dying !

O Blessed LORD ! Thou knowest our hearts. Thou knowest all the past. Thou knowest each secret thought now stirring in each

The Crucifixion.

soul here. Thou knowest ! Are we dying with Thee ? Is the old nature nailed to Thy Cross ? That old love of the world ? The old proud self ?



—The Crucifixion.

THE history of our LORD'S Crucifixion is clearly divided into two parts :

I. From 9 to 12 o'clock :—the sun shining brightly ; the people watching that Face of suffering. They that passed by reviled Him, saying, " Let Him save Himself, if He be the Christ," &c. So the rabble mocked and jeered, as He hung, still and patient, on the Cross. So was He insulted !

And yet we, His disciples, are content to go through life, hiding our best and truest feelings, for fear of being laughed at ;—while our LORD, on the Cross, with the clear, bright sunlight shining down on Him, bore, so patiently, all that mocking !

During these three hours, while they were scoffing, He was interceding ; true to His character of always forgetting self to help others. In His extremest agony, with that

The Crucifixion.

parching thirst, that failing pulse, that exhausted frame, He found time to pray for His murderers, as they drove those cruel nails in ; and to think of the poor outcast by His side. He forgave the penitent thief ; to cheer and encourage everyone who, hanging on the Cross with Him, even at the last moment of a wasted life, truly turns to Him.

It was then that our LORD, still putting self aside, looked on His Mother standing by the Cross, and seeing her strength failing, and knowing the deeper agony still in store for Himself, commended her to St. John.

II. Then came the hours of darkness. A great darkness fell on our Lord's inner thoughts ; not on the outward world only.

JESUS CHRIST, as "very Man," condescended to be left without any strength, except such as you and I have.* In all things, except sin, "He was made like unto His brethren."

In the Agony of Gethsemane, and in His great intercessory Prayer (St. John xvii.), He was sustained, perhaps, by the consciousness of His own sinlessness, and of the FATHER'S Love encircling Him. But now, it is the last drop of the cup ; and in the deep darkness,

Lessons from Calvary.

shrouded from the eye of man, and from the whole universe, the cry goes up; a "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"

Then comes another word, another out-going of that deep inner struggle, into which the mind of man is powerless to penetrate. "*I thirst.*"

It was not mere bodily thirst. It was a longing for the salvation of the world, yet seeing stretched out before Him 'the long ages to come; the age in which we live; the souls now among us that *will* be lost, because they choose to reject Him—to sell their LORD, for the money, the pleasures, the vanities of this life!

And so the struggle went on, till at last the cry rang out, the cry of victory: "It is finished!" "FATHER, into Thy Hands I commend My Spirit!"



—Lessons from Calvary.

LOOK on all this as a picture of the soul's experience, when the sense of the FATHER's Love is taken away; and when you doubt of the reality of your religion. You long to see

Lessons from Calvary.

everything perfect ; to see your ideal realised in your own life, in your family, in your Church, and so forth ; and yet you feel that it *never will* be realised. You feel your strength failing—your spiritual strength. You find that you cannot conquer the world as you had once hoped to do. Old sins, though forgiven long ago, leave their scars ; you are not so strong, spiritually, as you might have been. You feel that your ideal will never be realised here ; in yourself, in your home, or in the Church itself.

It is a time of struggle—of darkness. You doubt GOD's Love ; you doubt if He cares for the world, for the souls that He has redeemed, for the souls that you are caring for—or even for your own soul ! Darkness falls on you, and on all around you ; and you cry : “ My GOD, my GOD, why hast Thou forsaken me ?—I could bear Gethsemane ; I could bear it, when ‘ my *Father* ’ was near. But when it is merely the great Almighty One, and His Love is not clear to me ! I cannot bear it ! Let me alone ! ”

But after a time, that struggle ends, as our LORD's great battle ended ; and—very slowly, for we are but silly children, and learn very

Lessons from Calvary.

slowly, we learn this lesson, which CHRIST Himself learnt, as Man.

We are partakers of a fallen Humanity. This world is out of course; GOD's own glorious ideal will never be realised, here. We shall be always failing, though not finally conquered. The old nature will never be entirely crushed, here. We shall never be what we would be, here: and those whom we love will likewise fall short of GOD's ideal.

And then we come—very slowly and halt reluctantly at first, and we give up our hand, to be nailed to the Cross: and we learn to see the meaning of those words: "When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not."

We learn to see that, instead of active service, we may have to lie still; instead of realising what we wish—and what GOD Himself wishes—we may possibly have to die out in great darkness!

But GOD does not leave it here. We learn to say: "FATHER, into Thy Hands I commend

Christian Expectation.

my spirit." There arises a sort of joy, in not being allowed to have our own way ; we are made to feel that it is part of the way appointed to us for following the Crucified.



- Christian Expectation.

IF I were to describe in a single word the condition of many true believers in JESUS CHRIST, I should say that they "tarry in Jerusalem," but never expect to be "endued with power from on high." They wait in Jerusalem, "the City of Peace" ; they thank God that they are at peace through JESUS CHRIST, and they bewail with fitful penitence, from time to time, their own unworthiness. They acknowledge that self, and this lower earth, and all the vanities of this passing world, and the besetting sins of by-gone years, are still conquering them ; and that continually, in thought, and word, and deed ; they are grieving their GOD and FATHER. But they never seem to realise that ALMIGHTY GOD has put them into a position in which sin is not to have dominion over them ; in which,

Christian Expectation.

by the power of the in-dwelling Spirit, they are to triumph over all the powers of evil.

And even those who have been led to believe in GOD the HOLY GHOST, the "LORD" of this latter dispensation, the "Giver of Life," seem scarcely to realise that it is a Living Spirit with Whom they have to deal. They do not believe that CHRIST is year by year fulfilling His promise, that what His Church has bound on earth, He will bind in Heaven; that at each recurring Festival CHRIST is waiting at His royal throne, with gifts to distribute amongst His faithful followers; that for each of us, as each Christian year rolls silently by, there is the promise of new grace, new victories over a besetting sin, new insight into some spiritual mystery, a fresh in-coming of faith to pray in the Name of JESUS, a fresh outpouring of divine hope, the fruits of which shall abide when all the *natural* hope, which is merely the fruit of a sanguine temperament, has been replaced, in days of darkness, by a God-dishonouring fear. They do not believe that the tongue can be silenced which speaks those bitter words; that the heart can be cleansed which is so often filled with uncharitable thoughts

The Gift of the Spirit.

and grudging suspicions against those who have been baptized into the same Body, and made members of the same fellowship of the Saints. . . . They expect nothing ; they ask for nothing ; and so they receive but little blessing from each recurring Whitsuntide.



- The Gift of the Spirit.

You must often feel disappointed with yourself. When you are in Jerusalem, the City of Peace, in the quiet House of Prayer, kneeling at the Holy Table, or listening to God's Word read and preached, you are conscious of noble resolutions. You make up your mind that you will follow CHRIST, and be true men. And then, when you go out into the world, amid the excitement of debate, the cares of business, and the necessary duties of this earthly life, your brightest hopes pass away like some bright mirage, and there seems nothing left but failure and disappointment. Do you not feel, at times like these, "If I could always have a friend at my side—if I could always have somebody to remind me of the truths which I wish to remember !

The Gift of the Spirit.

If I could always have a friend to lay his hand on my shoulder, and say 'No gambling to-night; go past that door—thy soul is in danger! Be silent; laugh not at that ungodly jest!' O that I had someone who would whisper to me a text, in the midst of that busy work, that crowded assembly; someone who would draw my soul aside, but for an instant, and remind me of the God in Whom I live, and move, and have my being."

All, and more than all you ask, has been already bestowed upon you by the All-Merciful FATHER. "Your body is the Temple of the HOLY GHOST." You have not merely someone at your side, but the very Spirit of God dwelling in you, to endue you with the very power that you need, to give you the very thoughts that will strengthen you against temptation, to enable you in heart and mind to ascend with the ascended LORD, and with Him to dwell, not by fits and starts, but continually, in a blessed, calm, quiet, supernatural communion, such as the earth can neither give nor take away.



Holy Communion.

-Holy Communion.

VARIOUS *names* are given to Holy Communion.

Some people ignorantly call it "*the Sacrament!*" This must be a mistake. For there are *two* Sacraments : Baptism, by which we are grafted into CHRIST : and Holy Communion, by which our spiritual life is sustained.

(1.) It is rightly called "*Holy Communion,*" *i.e.*, fellowship ; because we are thereby united, in a way that we cannot understand—a super-natural way—to CHRIST and to each other : so that wherever members of the Church come to Holy Communion regularly and reverently, you find a care for each other—a sympathy—springing up, such as is not found among those who separate themselves from this holy fellowship. Holy Communion binds us to CHRIST, and to each other.

(2) It is called the "*Eucharist,*" from an old Greek word which means Thanksgiving : because the Holy Communion Service is, far above all others, a Service of Thanksgiving. That is why Holy Communion is especially

Why Holy Communion was Appointed.

celebrated on the great Festivals of the Church, when we are called on to remember CHRIST'S Birth, His Resurrection, &c. And whenever a new blessing has been given to our souls, or to the Church, those who have been trained up in Church principles do not feel that their Thanksgiving Day is perfect, unless there has been this great Thanksgiving Feast.

(3.) It is also called "the LORD'S Supper" : because that dear LORD, to Whom we owe everything, appointed it on that last night, when He was given up into the hands of wicked men.



—Why Holy Communion was appointed.

HOLY Communion was appointed *to remind us of JESUS CHRIST.*

This is a point on which all Christians agree. Every real Churchman will tell you that he comes to remind himself—to be reminded—of all that JESUS CHRIST has done for us. And this, in itself, is a blessed thing ; for you know, and I know, how often earth-born clouds arise between us and

Why Holy Communion was Appointed.

CHRIST. We know how easy it is to go on living as if this world were everything ; as if there were no CHRIST Who had died for us, no CHRIST looking down upon us from Heaven ; no CHRIST coming again. And so our LORD, knowing all this,—knowing how weak we are,—told His Church, whenever they brake that Bread and drank that Cup, to think of HIM.

Picture to yourself a boy gone out from home to fight the battle of life ; he has joined the careless, godless throng with whom he lives : but one night he finds an old time-worn letter. He stoops down to examine it, and discovers that it is the *last* letter his mother ever wrote to him. And that letter becomes, in God's hands, the means of turning him back again to all that he had loved in early years.

Our LORD adapts Himself to human nature. And so, in the Office for Holy Communion, we are reminded how the LORD JESUS, on that Thursday evening, took Bread and Wine, and said : Do this in remembrance of Me. It is as if we were to say to you, each time you come to that Holy Table : "Jesus died for you ! How can you doubt that He will

Holy Communion—Spiritual Food.

forgive you? JESUS died for you! How can you doubt that He is ready to give you all that you need? JESUS died for you! How can you keep that secret sin which grieves Him so much,—the sin which pierced the Hands once nailed to that cruel Cross for you?"



--Holy Communion—Spiritual Food.

HOLY Communion is the means of *strengthening and refreshing* our souls.

That same GOD Who made the body, made the soul. And as He has provided food for the body, by partaking of which food the body becomes strong, so that we can use it without weariness, the eyes can do their appointed work, the limbs can be made strong to bear fatigue, the nerves to bear disappointment, &c., so has He also provided food for the soul.

If we gather together the teaching in St. Luke xxii., and St. John vi., and 1 Corinthians xi., we see clearly that GOD gives the Lord JESUS CHRIST to be the Food of the soul, so that it is made strong : strong to see beyond

Holy Communion—Spiritual Food.

the mists of this world, strong to bear trials and temptations, strong to do with readiness whatever GOD wills.

We see that our blessed LORD, in the wonderful tenderness of His compassion, caring for the weakness of His people, and knowing that they would find it hard to realise what He had taught them in St. John vi., about eating His Flesh, and drinking His Blood, without some special help, "took bread,"—on that last night when His own great trial was at hand,—and blessed it and said: "This is My Body." As if to say: "There, you can see that Bread! As surely as you eat that Bread, solemnly set apart for the purpose, so surely will I come Myself, to be your spiritual Food and Drink in that holy Sacrament. Not more surely do you eat of that Bread and drink of that Cup, than do I pour into your soul that Blood, and give My Body to be the Food of your soul, so that you may have My Life in you,—may be able to please GOD here, and live with Him for ever hereafter."



Holy Communion and the Church Invisible.

—Holy Communion, and the Church Invisible.

HOLY Communion unites us to the Blessed Ones in Paradise; not merely to our fellow-Christians on earth. It is obvious that the real measure of our union with those who are "in CHRIST," like ourselves, but out of our sight, is the measure of the Divine Life which is circulated through us. A paralyzed limb, receiving very little of the life of the body, or a decaying branch, receiving very little of the life of the vine, has of course but a very slight communication with other members of the body, or branches of the vine. If your hand is paralyzed, you are hardly conscious that it is part of your body at all. Or if you cut off the decaying branch, and then look into the tree, you will find very little union between that branch and the rest of the branches. The greater the amount of life in the limb, or in the branch, the stronger its union with the other limbs and branches. And so, in proportion as the Divine Life circulates through the members of the mystical Body,—the branches of the mystical

Holy Communion in Relation to Daily Life.

Vine,—we are united, not merely to CHRIST Himself, and to our fellow-members on earth, but also to those in the invisible part of His Kingdom ; those Blessed Ones, into whose spirit a fuller portion of that Divine Life is now being poured, by God the Holy Spirit.



-- Holy Communion in Relation to Daily Life.

WE who communicate at God's Holy Table, who are taught to believe that "we dwell in CHRIST and CHRIST in us," are to cultivate the habit of not isolating our Communions from the rest of our lives, but of carrying the thought of that Holy Presence into the commonest details of our ordinary life. We are to cultivate the recollection of that mysterious Presence of our Lord, and let our hearts be like the Holy Temple in the City of Peace wherein the Lord dwelleth supreme.

Such a recollection must involve surrender, separation from much that the world counts harmless. If we realise but for one hour that we are ever bearing within us the CHRIST, and

Holy Communion in Relation to Daily Life.

that the mysterious union of our Eucharists is to be perpetuated ; if this glorious, tender, all-subduing Presence becomes a reality in our lives, then it will be impossible for us to defile the Temple of God, by bringing even careless thoughts into the very Sanctuary of the King. In the same way, it will become an impossibility for us to steal, as it were, a single pleasure from His Holy Presence.

If we form the habit of sanctifying CHRIST, as the Lord, in our lives, we shall soon learn what pleasures we may indulge, and what must be avoided. And again, if we do so sanctify Him, if we separate Him off from all earthly leaders, if we refuse to recognize any one else as the Lord of our life, then we shall never allow ourselves to be thoroughly satisfied with anything in the world. We shall look upon all the difficulties and the discomfiture of the various branches of the Church, all the discord, heresy, and strife, as the unconscious testimony of a fallen world, groaning, travailing in pain, because it is waiting for the coming of its Lord.



Holy Communion in Relation to Others.

—Holy Communion in Relation to Others.

I. *HOLY COMMUNION is a means of uniting us to other Christians ; to all, present or absent, who are united to CHRIST. "We, being many, are one Bread, and one Body, for we are all partakers of that one Bread."* As, in a mysterious way, we are united to CHRIST Himself in Holy Communion, so, in a not less mysterious way, we are united to other Christians. And so we find that if we come to Holy Communion in the spirit of our Prayer Book, we learn to love more care more for—pray more for—our fellow communicants.

2. *Holy Communion is a badge of membership ; a means of marking those who belong to Christ.*

The mere fact of coming to Holy Communion, when so many turn away, marks you ; it separates you from the rest of the world, and makes others watch you.

If, therefore, when you go home, you are as disagreeable, as ill-tempered, as before ; if the servant is as careless,—the mistress as exacting,—the girl who has worldly ad-

Holy Communion in Relation to God.

vantages as overbearing as ever,—the world will say, “Holy Communion does them no good ; they are more disagreeable than ever ; therefore I shall stay away.”

You must not be discouraged by all this. Though you fall, you shall arise. GOD knows how weak you are : and He will help you, however often you may fall. But I want to shew you that watchfulness will be required in you, as Communicants, that you may not bring disgrace on the Name of CHRIST.



—Holy Communion in Relation to God.

GOD ALMIGHTY has always had on earth a certain number of people whom we may call His “Church” ; people who have acknowledged Him ; people to whom He has given special proofs of His love, and readiness to help.

With these, from time to time, He has made a “Covenant.” And GOD,—knowing how hard it is for us to remember Him and believe in Him, with all our weakness and temptations,—whenever he made a Covenant, gave a sign, or token, upon which He

Holy Communion in Relation to God.

promised that He would look down from Heaven, and on which we also might look from earth.

As GOD looked down on the Bow in the cloud and on the Blood sprinkled on the doorposts, so GOD looks down on that Bread and Wine :—He is pleased, in human language, to “look upon it, that He may remember the Everlasting Covenant” : that He may remind Himself of that Covenant.

Of course, GOD knows, and GOD remembers, at all times. . So also it might be said of Prayer, &c. But He has said : “Put Me in remembrance : let us plead together.”

In Holy Communion, we say : “O GOD, look upon this Bread—this Wine, and remember that pierced Body, that outpoured Blood of Thy Dear Son !”

It is the Church's great way of pleading the Promise. It is a Prayer, in *act*.

The great blessing of this way of looking at Holy Communion is this :—As you go on, there will be times of darkness,—times when you feel unable to pray, or to realise anything. You come to your Holy Communion, and can only say “Amen” to the prayers offered. But in that “Amen,” you are

Holy Communion in Relation to our Lord's Coming.

saying : " O GOD, remember Thy Covenant !
I am baptized into Him ! I am, a part of His
body ! O GOD, remember ! "



— Holy Communion in Relation to our Lord's Coming.

AT Holy Communion, a Book of Remem-
brance is, as it were, written before the
LORD ;—a Book of Remembrance, for them
that fear the LORD, and that *think upon His
Name*. " For as often as ye eat this Bread
and drink this Cup, ye do *shew* the LORD's
Death, *till He come*."

Every time that we draw nēār, the Church
bids us, by the very words of her Consecra-
tion-Prayer, remember that the Coming of
the LORD draweth nigh. She lifts us up, as
it were, above all the distractions and
anxieties, all the difficulties and wranglings
and disappointments, of this lower earth ;
and she tells us that *all this has been antici-
pated*. She bids us strengthen our hearts, by
reminding ourselves how CHRIST foretold that
the darkness would deepen, that iniquity

Holy Communion in Relation to our Lord's Coming.

would abound, that the ungodly would wax worse and worse, and that many things would happen which would make His followers despond.

It is wonderful sometimes to take up a leading article in the newspaper, and compare it with the Bible, and see how, almost in the same words, it describes that which CHRIST had foretold, and shews that one of His prophecies is now beginning to be fulfilled.

And then, when all seems dark around, the very eating of the Bread, and the drinking of the Wine, and the listening to the words, "A perpetual memory of that His precious Death, *until His coming again*," seem to tell us to lift up our heads, because our Redemption draweth nigh. The shaking in the heavens, and the darkening of the sun, and the falling of the stars, and the utter bewilderment and perplexity of the world, are but the signs of His Coming. They are like the footfalls of the dark-robed messengers who are heralding His Advent. They are the echoes of the great Archangel's voice : " Rejoice, rejoice, ye people of

Holy Communion and the Holy Spirit.

the LORD ; your King is coming ! Thy King is coming, O daughter of Zion ; the LORD is at hand, to gather together all who love His Appearing—all the members of the Family. He is coming, to gather them to Himself ; to set them free from the corruption and the disappointment of even the holiest life that is struggling after a Divine ideal."



--Holy Communion and the Holy Spirit.

ONE reason why we receive so little conscious benefit from Holy Communion,—why some who found such blessings from Holy Communion, in early days, are now becoming cold, and seem to gather so little life from it,—one great reason, which affects the life of even the most earnest, is this :—they do not practically recognize the Presence of the HOLY SPIRIT ; and GOD has chosen that, in this Dispensation, the Holy Spirit should be especially honoured. (St. John vii. 37, 39 ; xiv. 25, 26 ; xv. 26 ; xvi. 13, 15. Rom. viii. 2. 1 Cor. ii. 12, 14. 2 Cor. iii. 8, 16-18.)

Holy Communion and the Holy Spirit.

It is the HOLY SPIRIT'S office, at every Communion, to take of the things belonging to Jesus, and to shew them unto us. It is God the Blessed Spirit alone, Who has the power to lift up the fallen, to strengthen the weak-hearted, to open our long-closed eyes, and reveal the Angels and Arch-angels and all the Company of Heaven, by whom we are surrounded. It is God the Blessed Spirit alone Who can give us any spiritual gift.

Depend more upon Him, therefore, to enable you to offer aright the Church's spiritual sacrifice. Depend upon Him, to open the treasure-house, and to bring out the grace which He may see that you need, at each Communion. Depend upon Him, so to circulate the life, that you may be united with your brethren. Depend upon Him, to warm the cold heart, to quicken your faith in the atoning Blood, and in the Divine, supernatural sympathy of the Man of Sorrows. Depend upon Him, to fill you with hope of the Advent, and to enable you to praise the Triune GOD.



The Worthy Receiving of the Holy Communion.

—The Worthy Receiving of Holy Communion.

THE Exhortation, in the Prayer Book, tells us to “consider the great *dignity* of that Holy Mystery, and the great peril of the unworthy receiving thereof.” In other words : “Take care, lest, instead of receiving any blessing, you go away weaker than you came ; with less capacity for receiving spiritual blessing.”

The idea that by coming only three times a year, we escape the danger, is based on no foundation. Whether only once a year, or three times a year, or every day, it is “*dangerous* to them that will presume to receive it unworthily ”

But there is a vast difference between receiving it “unworthily,” and being unworthy to come. Not one of us is “worthy” to come. There is not one who has looked into his own heart, however imperfectly, who has not found such countless sins, that he must feel himself unworthy to come. And therefore the Church puts these words into the mouth of the Clergyman, and you say “Amen” to them : “We are not worthy so

Preparation for Holy Communion.

much as to gather up the crumbs under Thy Table.”

If, at any time, hereafter, you feel utterly weak, and are depressed, because you feel you have lived so little for GOD—sacrificed so little for Him—far from sending you away, He bids you draw near. At such times, the “Prayer of humble access” will come the most truly to your lips. At no time will JESUS speak more lovingly to you, and say those “comfortable words” more surely: “Come unto Me, ye that labour and are heavy laden,”—come unto Me, you that are sorry for your sins, and wish to be better—“and I will give you Rest.”



Preparation for Holy Communion.

How *should we prepare* for Holy Communion? What is needed?

1. *Repentance*; i.e., acknowledging your sin, and being sorry for it.
2. *Faith*; i.e., believing what God tells you; believing that He has put away your sin, by the Sacrifice of CHRIST.
3. *Surrender* to God:—surrender, so far as

Preparation for Holy Communion.

you at present see His Will. Only so far as this, remember. For each year you live, according as God sees that you can bear it, He will shew you something new, in which to surrender yourself to Him. Just now it may only be this: "Restore that thing which you have stolen"; or some equally simple duty. But presently, He will teach more. He may say to you, e.g.: "You must set an example, and dress more quietly"; or "Teach in the Sunday School"; or "Open your lips and speak to others about Me." Each year, He will ask of you something new. Sufficient unto the day is the *teaching* thereof. So far as you know what He wants you to do, now, there must be this surrender: and then, when He sees that you can bear a new lesson, He will turn over a new leaf, in the Christian grammar.

4. *Be thankful!* Be thankful to God, even if you have had bad health, hard work, &c., and feel out of spirits altogether. Ask the Blessed Spirit to shew you that the few years you have to spend here, on earth, are only a preparation for that glorious life which will last for ever, to be spent with all those who have lived to God, here. Thank God

The Real Presence of our Lord in Holy Communion.

for all the help that He has given to you ; for spiritual help and teaching ; and, above all for the blessed Bible and for the Saviour of whom it tells you.

5. *Love to others.* You *want* to love others ; you want to do good. There is not one of you who cannot find some opportunity. It may be simply by kindness to a brother or sister ; or by going out of your way to please some "aggravating" person ; or by being kind to your inferiors ; or by trying to do your work for your mistress cheerfully—the work hitherto done in a discontented spirit ; or by opening the lips and saying a word for the dear Lord, Who died for us.



—The Real Presence of our Lord in Holy Communion.

OUR LORD is always present, in a sense. He is with you, even if you are sweeping a room, or cleaning your house, or making up your accounts. He is near us, wherever we are.

But there are some ways in which He is pleased *specially* to reveal Himself. He has

The Real Presence of our Lord in Holy Communion.

said that where two or three are gathered together in His Name, there He is, in the midst of them : and we all believe that in a special way He is near us at such times, because He has promised it.

So, in the same way, we believe that in the solemn Service wherein He gives Himself to us, He is near.

When we come, in all our weakness, with no *consciousness* of His Presence, only casting ourselves at His feet, and saying, "LORD, I believe ; Thou hast said, This is My Body, this is My Blood ; I believe it ; I bring my poor heart to be fed and cleansed,"—then, "we dwell in Him, and He in us."

But *how* ?—I do not know. I know that it is true. I know that CHRIST is true : and He said it.

There is a story in the Gospels which will help us to realise it. When He was on earth, He had compassion on the hungry multitudes. "From whence," the disciples asked, "can a man satisfy these men with bread, here in the wilderness ?" So now, His Ministers ask : "How can *we* feed and guide these multi-

Union and Communion.

tudes, one by one ;—we, with all our sins and shortcomings?”

“Make the men sit down,” He said : as now He says, “Bid them kneel there— at that Holy Table !”

And then He took the Bread in His sacred Hands, and gave thanks : and then, by means of His disciples, went up and down in the hungry crowd, till “they did all eat and were filled.” •

How it was done, the multitude never asked. When He had said, “Give Me the bread you have,” it was given to Him ; and it became an abundant feast.

That same JESUS is here. He gives thanks : He makes an Eucharist. His Ministers go on, from age to age, dispensing the Feast. You draw near ; you receive that wondrous gift, the Body and Blood of CHRIST, into your soul ; and you are “satisfied.” •



—Union and Communion.

WE all long, more or less, for union. We are wearied of party struggles and party shibboleths. We wish to concentrate our strength,

Union and Communion.

not on internal warfare, but on our life-long battle against the world and the flesh and the devil.

How shall this union be effected? It cannot be attained by ignoring the points in which we honestly differ from each other. Still less would we attain to it by striving to banish from the Church those who, though loyal to her teaching, do not agree with ourselves.

All merely external union must end in failure. Like the builders of Babel, its promoters will be scattered abroad when the LORD GOD comes down to test the reality of the work.

But there is a more excellent way, taught to our fathers in the Apostolic days. The HOLY GHOST so bound the members of the infant Church together, that they "continued with *one accord* in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in *breaking of bread* and in prayers." By the power of that Blessed Spirit they ate of that one Bread and drank of that one Cup, and were not only united to their LORD, but to each other.

"We being many are one Bread and one Body, for we are all partakers of that one

The Mystical Body of Christ.

Bread." According to our Faith so shall it be unto us. LORD, open our eyes, that we may see the fulness of this Blessing which Thou dost prepare for us at that Holy Table.

So, not only shall we learn to love Him more Who has washed us from our sins in His own most precious Blood, but as we eat of that one Bread, and drink of that one Cup, the hidden life will flow through the varied members of the one Body. So, "speaking the truth in love,"—holding fast what GOD has taught us, but holding it in a spirit of forbearance with those who differ from us—we shall "grow up into Him in all things which is the Head, even Christ, from Whom the whole Body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the Body unto the edifying of itself in love."



—The Mystical Body of Christ.

OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST came, not merely to atone for man's sin by His Life of Obedience

The Mystical Body of Christ.

and His precious Blood-shedding, but also to prepare the way for the establishment of a Kingdom. He gathered around Him a little band of men; He trained them Himself! and He told them of a day coming, when they were to be filled with the HOLY GHOST, so as to become a living, organized Body, and carry on the work of their invisible Head, until He should return to be manifested to His waiting people.

Our LORD provided that this Body, which was to represent Him on earth, should—like the natural body—be fitted for its appointed work.

As the natural body is filled with a mysterious something which we call "Life," so is the Church of CHRIST penetrated throughout by the influence of the HOLY GHOST, the Giver of Life. The human body, without life, would be mere clay. And the Church, or any part of it, if not thus vivified by that Living Spirit, however beautiful in appearance, or perfect in organization, would be but as the dead corpse of a once living friend.

As GOD has provided for this earthly frame certain organs—hands, feet, &c.,—by which its life is to be manifested and developed;

Mystical Body of Christ.

so also has CHRIST provided "organs" for His Body, the Church. These "organs" are not made by the Body itself; nor are they to assert lordship over the rest of the Body. But they were made by CHRIST Himself, for the use of the Body, as the means by which its functions were to be exercised, and its life developed.

Therefore, the Body of CHRIST is not a mere trunk without a head. The Head of the Body is Christ; and Christ is "alive for evermore." In the natural body, the head carries out its will by means of the members; but it lives in close, indissoluble, personal union with those members. So it is with CHRIST and His Church. Our LORD Himself is as really seeking, healing, binding up, &c., now, as when visible among the hills of Galilee. He is invisible; the white cloud has received Him out of our sight. But He still speaks and works among us, by means of the Church, as His outward manifestation, and the HOLY GHOST, as the inward Witness, the energizer of the Body, giving life, and increasing it. "He shall testify of Me," inwardly; "and ye also shall bear witness," outwardly.

Honour all Men.

—Honour all Men.

THERE are certain tones of thought, certain forms of religion, certain classes of minds, which are repulsive to us, - which, to use the common expression, "rub us the wrong way," by a want of refinement, a want of softness, a want of education, a vulgar tendency to dwell upon their money, upon those things that the finer minds of England, thank God, do not look upon as the true standard of greatness and nobility. They ruffle our temper, and so we try to avoid them; and if we were honestly asked, we should like, in Heaven itself, to be as far removed from *them* as possible!

Now, my own belief is this. So far as my experience goes, it is generally through those persons that ALMIGHTY GOD intends to convey some great blessing to our souls. There is often in such men a particle of Divinity. If they have been baptized, and have believed in JESUS, they are part of "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood"; and they have a priesthood to exercise towards us—a priesthood of blessing. Hereafter they will appear without all that vulgarity, without all that

The Church and the Individual.

which is offensive, all that we shrink from here ; *perfect* ; nothing visible then, but that little spark of Divinity, that little green blade which, as yet, has scarcely sprung up above the ground ; that Divinely-implanted seed, the portion of the Incarnate God.

Look at the troublesome member of your family, the annoying friend, the religious partisan who irritates you by his words—look at everybody that has been baptized into the Body of CHRIST—in the light of Divine revelation ; look at them in the light of that grand Resurrection, when the great, and the strong, and the noble, and the leaders in this world will lead will *continue* to lead—only so far as they have cast aside all that is earthly, and been content, like little children, to put in no claim but that they are justified, sanctified, washed, baptized, accepted in JESUS CHRIST their LORD.



—The Church and the Individual.

WE receive, in all their completeness, both Apostolic Order and Evangelical Liberty.

The Church and the Individual.

We recognize the solemn individuality of each man and woman. But we believe also that it is God's Will that we should live as "members one of another." We believe in "the Holy Catholic Church."

"Church Truth." — "Individual Christianity!" These are the mottoes inscribed upon the banners which the party-leaders of this century are carrying everywhere; striving — God grant they may never succeed! — to rend the Church asunder.

At one time, the banner of "Church Truth" waves proudly on the breeze; at another time it is dragged through the mire, and nothing is heard but the cry of "Freedom of the individual soul!" There have been ages when man's individuality was almost ignored, and nothing was heard but the voice of a domineering Church; and there have been times when the Church, in her turn, was ignored.

It is, I believe, the province of the Christianity of this century—not necessarily to harmonise these two, still less to compromise, but—to accept both Truths, because both alike are "revealed" in Holy Scripture; to leave the "secret things" unto the LORD

The Infant Church.

our God; to take, in its simplicity and entirety, whatever that ALMIGHTY FATHER has revealed; and at once to turn each part of Truth to practical account, so that whether we are "Evangelicals" or "Churchmen," we shall try to "do all the words of this Law," so far as they have been revealed to our own consciences.



—The Infant Church.

THE strength of the Infant Church was derived simply from the unseen presence of the HOLY GHOST. He, the Living Spirit, dwelt in that body of despised Galileans. Unseen by human eye, He entered into the hearts of men, and convinced them "of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." He drove home the preached Word with such Divine force, that old, self-satisfied, hardened worldlings were compelled to cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" "What shall we do to be saved?" He went forth with those first disciples, and gave such reality to their Baptism, that men, women, and children, who were dipped in that life-giving stream,

The Infant Church.

became grafted into a spiritual Community, and were brought within all the blessed influences of the Holy Trinity. He was so present with them at their Holy-Communions, that when the Apostles blessed that Bread and Wine, every believing heart was strengthened with the Body and Blood of the Incarnate God.

So Christianity spread. So, century after century, in its own despite, has the world been used as the scaffolding, with which to rear the spiritual temple. So, although the oracles of Greece are dumb, and Rome's most costly shrines are crumbling into dust, the religion which was founded by those peasants of Galilee, has for ages commanded the homage and retained the allegiance of the most civilised nations of the world. "God hath chosen the weak things of the world, to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things which are; that no flesh should glory in His presence"; that all mankind should acknowledge the truth of His Eternal Law: "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the LORD of Hosts."

The Church's Future in England.

—The Church's Future in England.

THE future of the Establishment is, to a large extent, in our own hands. We have nearly exhausted the force of prestige; we have nearly spent the influence which we have inherited from our forefathers. In the sweat of our own brow we must now eat our bread.

If Dissent, in proportion to its wealth and numbers, is allowed to give ten pounds, for every sovereign which is subscribed in the Church; if, for one man who works for the Church, ten toil for the Chapel; if the Non-conformist hastens home from the business of the City, and, after his hurried meal, goes out to spend his leisure in working for his religion, while too many Churchmen, after no greater fatigue, prefer to rest or to enjoy themselves, and leave the masses to be visited and educated by those who hate the very name of the Church—it needs no prophet's voice to foretell the issue.

If, above all, conversions are permitted to diminish in the Church, while they increase in the Chapel; if we are satisfied with a quiet, respectable indifferentism; if the HOLY

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GHOST is not recognized in our midst ; if His Presence is not evidenced by that real Faith in the LORD JESUS CHRIST, which nerves men to sacrifice time, and strength, and wealth, for Him Who has washed their sins away in His Own most precious Blood ;—if more is not done to establish the Kingdom of CHRIST in foreign lands,—then, the end is not far distant. As it was with Ephesus and Laodicea, so shall it be with that part of the Catholic Church into which we have been baptized. “ No might ” of State patronage, no “ power ” of perfect organization can save it from utter destruction ; the wall that is built with untempered mortar shall fall ; the LORD GOD will rend it with a stormy wind in His fury.

But, on the other hand, let the HOLY GHOST be duly honoured ; let that spirit of vital Godliness, which is now spreading in our midst, be still further developed ; let Holy Communions, Prayer Meetings, earnest wrestlings of the individual soul in the silence of its own chamber, let these increase and multiply. Let the idea be fostered through the length and breadth of the land, that it is the highest life of the creature to glorify its

Religion and Politics.

Creator, — the greatest privilege of the ransomed ones, to lay at the feet of their Redeemer, the gold, and the frankincense, and the myrrh. Let the Holy Ghost thus be allowed to rule in the Church of England, and I am perfectly happy as to her future, whatever may be her earthly position. She will live to share the ultimate triumph of the universal Church, and to take her part in the great Eucharistic Hymn which shall rise from myriads of ransomed Saints, when He Who laid the foundation-stone, on the blood-stained heights of Calvary, shall complete the fabric amid the over-powering glory of the Second Advent.



—Religion and Politics.

It is a common saying, that "Religion has nothing to do with politics." In one sense the statement is false ; in another, it is true. It is false, if it means that Christianity does not recognize those natural ties, whereby the same GOD Who has united individuals in the bonds of a family, has also joined them together in the wider bond of a nation. It is

Religion and Politics.

false, if it would uphold that spurious form of Christianity which, in its zeal for the Catholic Church dispersed throughout the world, would water down the great principles of loyalty, of joy in a nation's glory, and of longing for a nation's advancement; everything, in fact, that we describe under the general terms of loyalty and patriotism. If it means that Religion is not to penetrate into politics, it is a simple lie. Imagine the bare idea of shutting God out of the world that He has created — of excluding the Almighty from the councils of men who by their own confession depend on Him, for life, and breath, and all things.

But underlying this statement there is a truth. Every "prophet," every teacher of God, who descends to party politics,—who allows his own private predilections, be they Conservative or be they Liberal, to obtrude into the pulpit, has thereby failed to recognize the high calling wherewith he has been called of God in CHRIST JESUS.

His duty, as I conceive, is to take facts for granted—to accept what has been done, while knowing that by some in his congregation it is liked, and that by others it is disliked. He leaves those questions to be discussed in that

Foreign Missions.

great Council of the nation, which (thank God!) is sanctified by prayer at the beginning of every discussion. He knows that even if a nation has acted wisely, it still depends upon God, and upon the co-operation of the country how far the good seed sown can be developed: "first the blade, then the ear; after that, the full corn in the ear." He also knows—and thanks God for it—that if a nation has failed—God will reveal this also unto her, lovingly and tenderly; that in answer to the continued supplications in Church and State, He will gradually overcome evil with good.



—Foreign Missions.

WORDS have a strange influence over thoughts; and that word "Foreign" has, I believe, done a great deal to alienate the hearts of people from the work of the Church abroad. There is a sort of idea that there are *two* Churches! It only needs to put it into plain words, to expose the fallacy. The Church is described in the Bible as "the Body of CHRIST"; but the Body is one, although it has many members. The Church is described as "the

Foreign Missions.

Temple of the living God " but the Temple is one, though formed of many living stones. The Church is a " Vine," with manifold branches, stretching out north and south and east and west ! but the Vine is one tree.

So also in its more militant aspect, as opposed to the principalities and powers of darkness, that are everywhere thwarting it throughout the world, the Church is an Army ; many regiments, at home and abroad, yet but one army.

And just as, in the earthly army, any difference that is made is in favour of the service abroad, so also should it be with the great Army of " the Church militant : the Church of CHRIST," fighting the battle of the LORD against the powers of evil. For the soldiers of the earthly army, when serving abroad, nothing is ever grudged. The men are properly equipped ; the best arms are sent. In proportion to the difficulty of the war is the generous spirit in which England rises so carefully to provide, that no single need of her soldiers shall be overlooked.

And so you and I believe that we are serving under the banner of the Eternal King. We believe that we belong to the " one army

Christ's Interest in Foreign Missions.

of the Living God." And it is for our fellow-soldiers abroad that I am pleading; those who are going out in His Name to plant the banner of the Cross in the uttermost parts of the earth. Would that I could stir in your hearts a real enthusiasm for this part of our "one army."



—Christ's Interest in Foreign Missions.

WAS there ever a true Teacher, who felt no interest in the progress of his scholars? Was there ever a real Leader of our earthly army, who cared not whether his soldiers were defeated, or whether they brought back the colours triumphantly out of the land of the foe?

And does not our "Leader and Commander" care? Does not that CHRIST who shed His Blood for the world look anxiously—to use human language, reverently—on the conflict? Are we not told that the LORD is "henceforth expecting," "waiting," till His enemies are subdued beneath His feet?

He is waiting, He hears the prayers of the Church on earth. He hears the prayers of

The Selflessness of the Angels.

the Church in Paradise. He hears the groans of this weary world, the great travail-pangs of Creation. And He is waiting; waiting to come back in His glory, waiting to set the world free from all its sorrow, sin, and trouble.

He is waiting—for what? He has told us. "This Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." He is waiting; not till all the world has been converted, but till the Gospel of His Kingdom has been proclaimed among all the nations of the earth, as a "witness," and *then*, the end shall come.



—The Selflessness of the Angels.

LET us try to realise what the Incarnation must have been to the Angels, and let us think first, what pain must have been given to those pure spirits, by the fall of man. For ages they had lived in the Presence of God; they had witnessed the rebellion of Satan and the wicked angels, with unspeakable agony; then, they had seen Adam and Eve in Para-

The Selflessness of the Angels.

dise, and had watched this new race of beings, blest with every spiritual blessing, fed with the fruit of the Tree of Life, refreshed by the Water of Life, flowing through the Garden of Eden, and yet deliberately giving themselves over to do the will of the leader of that rebel band of angels, by whom the Majesty of God had been outraged. Think, if we may apply to such a subject the standard of human thought — think, after that, what an astounding Revelation it must have been to the Angelic hosts, that, notwithstanding man's sin, the purpose of God in the Incarnation still held sure, and that God Himself, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, Whom the Angels ceaselessly adored, Whose commands they gladly fulfilled, was going to pass by the Angelic ranks, and tabernacle in the very body of fallen man; that sinful children of Adam would become objects of God's special love, that one man would lie on His Breast, that another would be allowed to touch His Sacred Form; that He would deign to call human beings His Brethren; that He would, in very deed, make them partakers of His Divine Nature. What self-abnegation it must

The Selflessness of the Angels.

require on the part of the holy Angels, to make them joyfully accept the position of ministering spirits to man, and go forth to guard and watch over the heirs of salvation, thus called by GOD's Providence to a higher place than themselves. Surely, as we dwell on the thought of the wonderful order in which GOD has constituted the services of Angels and men, it ought to bring this practical result ; we should think how we nourish our lower nature by living for popularity, and the praise of our fellow-men ; and remember all the time, that if the eyes of our mind were open, we should see that the public opinion we ought to think of, is that of the ten thousand times ten thousand Angels who circle round GOD's Throne ; we should meditate on their entire self-abnegation, as they watch over us in this life, and stand ready, when GOD so wills it, to carry us upward to the heavenly mansions prepared for faithful souls ; rejoicing, in their utter absence of self-love, over the closeness of our union with the Incarnate GOD.



'Be filled with the Spirit.'

—“Be filled with the Spirit.”

USE every means of strengthening the Divine life which is within you; that is the root of the matter. Just as an earthly physician is not content with alleviating acute symptoms of disease, but gives his patient a rule of life, which will obviate illness by strengthening the system; so God gives us this rule, “Be filled with the Spirit,” and then you will, as a matter of course, throw off gradually the desires of the lower nature. But, in order to do this, we must be careful to confess to God every sin of which we are conscious, lest there should be a barrier to hinder the flowing in of His grace. If thoughts of pride and self-complacency at any imagined gift or superiority arise, we must confess them as we should any of the grosser desires of the flesh; for unless we keep our conscience clear, we shall find in some mighty crisis of our spiritual life, that we have nourished a deadly viper in our hearts, by yielding all unconsciously to the wishes of the lower nature.

Then, beside this general rule, we should meditate much on the Precious Blood of

“Be filled with the Spirit.”

JESUS CHRIST and on His finished work. We should quietly strengthen the stream of our own spiritual life by united prayer, and by Christian converse, not about our own souls, but about our Lord. Above all, we must prepare rightly for, and come frequently to the Holy Communion, that CHRIST may enter in and dwell in our hearts. The lower nature cannot abide in the place where CHRIST comes in to dwell.

So, keeping the current of spiritual life strong by these means, we will hold on our way. Very often, it may be, we shall be dull, unhappy, oppressed with evil, crying out with St. Paul, “In me dwells no good thing”; but still we will persevere, through all the difficulties that surround us, until we have learned the lesson of self-abnegation. And when the dark times come in our life, as come they must, we shall find help and comfort in saying to ourselves, We *know*—not we feel—but we know, as a fact revealed in GOD’S Word, that “all things work together for good to them that love God”; they work together either for our own good, or for the good of others; to comfort us, or to teach a lesson to some poor suffering member of

Personal Witnessing for a Personal Saviour

CHRIST'S Body, or for the instruction of the Holy Angels, who, it may be, have wonderful lessons to learn from watching God's discipline of His earthly children. Then comes the grand thought to those who love Him, that God knew us ; that He set us apart by our Baptism. And if God be for us, who can be against us ? He Who gave His own SON, shall He not freely with Him give us all things ?



Personal Witnessing for a Personal Saviour.

WE want men and women on whom the Church could depend, as sure to stand bravely on the Lord's side, in whatever society they might be thrown. We want a little band of *Believers* !—of Believers, in the deepest sense : conscious, indeed, of weakness and infirmity ; often failing, and confessing their own sinfulness to the end : yet strong in the LORD, and in the power of His might ;—living epistles, known and read of all men. (Eph. vi. 10. 2 Cor. iii. 1, 3.)

Personal Witnessing for a Personal Saviour.

We want people that have a definite object in life :—one end and aim throughout—alike in the dull winter, and in the exciting London Season :—to glorify GOD, and to bear witness for the LORD JESUS CHRIST. (1 Cor. x. 31. St. John xv. 27. Phil. ii. 15, 16 ; iii. 13, 14.)

The young married woman, in whose presence the voice of scandal is hushed :—who has courage to protest against the degrading literature that robs so many of their early purity ;—who will say to her friend : “ Forgive me for speaking, but is it *right* to read that book ? ”—or who will gently stop the young girl whom she finds reading some newspaper report, and say : “ My child, you must not read this : it is a shame even to speak of such things.” (Eph. v. 12. Isa. xxxiii. 15. Prov. iv. 14, 15. St. Matt. v. 8.)

The young man, who, when he hears his LORD insulted, in the pleasant country-house where he is staying, will speak out,—not rudely, forgetting all that the Bible says about courtesy, yet bravely and firmly : who will pray silently, when he hears those sinful words, and then — when his opportunity

For Use in Time of Adversity.

comes,—will lift up his heart afresh to God, and say quietly : “You know that such a story ought never to have been repeated ;” or—“Surely you do not think *that* was the right way of spending Sunday ?”

Such witnesses, thank God, are still to be found amongst us. Deep is their influence. Cheering it is to watch them : so quiet and unobtrusive, yet so ready to speak, when needed !



—For Use in Time of Adversity.

I BELIEVE in JESUS CHRIST : He has washed me from my sins in His own most precious Blood. As the Israelite was safe from the angel of death, if only he remained until the morning in the house which had been sprinkled with blood, so am I allowed to remain “until the Day break, and the shadows flee away,”—sprinkled with His Blood,—saying : “Behold, GOD is my Salvation ; I will trust, and not be afraid.”

I will honour GOD and glorify His SON, by believing that I am complete *in Him*,—“accepted in the Beloved.” LORD, I believe ;

For Use in Time^s of Adversity.

help Thou mine unbelief ! Yes, if I lie for the whole time of my prayer, prostrate at the feet of the All-holy, unable to concentrate my thoughts—only^e able to say, again and again, the same words,—I will honour Thy SON, O GOD ! My FATHER, I will be content to remain helpless and in darkness, confident that *in Him*, I am pleading ;—that my miserable self is hidden behind the All-perfect Advocate, Who knows me, loves me, speaks for me, as I lie trembling and ashamed. “We dwell in Him,” as well as “He in us.” (See Rom. viii. 31, 39.)

CHRIST, my risen LORD, is *in me*, fighting in me against my foe and His foe ; fighting in me that battle which *must* issue in victory, if waged by Him Who will come at last out of Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah, etc., acknowledged as Conqueror over all the dark kingdom of Satan. “I live ; yet not I, but CHRIST liveth in me.”

The deep mystery of evil can never be solved ; but its effects are obvious :—pain, suffering, etc., as fully embodied in the life of the Incarnate, and in the agony of Gethsemane and Calvary. To Him, each member of the Mystical Body must be conformed.

For Use in Time of Adversity.

Nails,—thorns,— Blood-drops falling—darkness: What does all this symbolise? Is it unbroken joy, never-ending sunshine, communion with the FATHER without any interruption? “It is enough for the disciple that he be *as his Master*.”

When we are the most helpless, dark, and cold, power goes out oft-times the most markedly, to others. Satan says: “Be silent, till your own heart recovers its tone of warmth and love.” The Christian answers: “No! I am but the channel; and through me the living water shall flow, if God will. Through me, if He will, He can speak.” This is very important. When GOD is going to use us, He first breaks down the self in us; and there are times,—alas! only rare, but still there are times,—when the soul can say, “O God, I am cold, dead, weak; unable to feel, or love, or pray. The glory will all be Thine. Shew Thy power, and speak through me! Use me!”

If I am too weak to speak, or read, or pray—if it sounds a mere mockery to bid me *cling* to my LORD, yet I may *abide* in Him; and, if I abide in Him, I shall bring forth much fruit. If I abide in Him, I may ask what I

For Use in Time of Adversity.

will, and it shall be done unto me. He, Who is "the Truth" has said, "Whatsoever ye shall ask the FATHER in My Name, He will give it you." "Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." If I cannot say long prayers, I can mention before GOD, in the Name of JESUS CHRIST, with thanksgiving, any need of the Church, of my family, &c., which presses on my mind. "O GOD, I thank Thee that Thou hast said, that whatsoever I ask in the Name of Thy SON, Thou wilt give. O GOD, I cannot pray, or feel, or love; yet remember these souls—remember this need, I beseech Thee. I ask it in the Name of JESUS CHRIST, Thy SON, my LORD." The seed thus sown in tears will bring forth fruit, to be reaped with joy by myself, or by others—here on earth, or in the light of the world to come.



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